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Mr. Pickwick's triumphant Entry into Ipswich

PICKWICK ABROAD

or the

TOUR IN FRANCE;

BY G. W. M. REYNOLDS.

THE RETURN TO DULW[illegible]

'MIDST PLEASURES AND PALACES THO' WE MAY ROAM
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE, THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

PICKWICK ABROAD;

OR,

THE TOUR IN FRANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"ROBERT MACAIRE IN ENGLAND," &c. &c.

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PICKWICK ABROAD;

OR

THE TOUR IN FRANCE.

A SERIES OF PAPERS COMPILED FROM THE PRIVATE NOTES AND MEMORANDA OF SAMUEL PICKWICK, ESQ.

TO THE READER.

THE immortal "Boz" has done so much to render the public familiar with the characters and adventures of some of the most remarkable men of the present day—viz., Mr. Pickwick and his followers—that it is only with extreme diffidence a new historian has ventured to continue the lives of those extraordinary individuals. But short and to the purpose be the introduction to these Memoirs.

In the month of September, 1837, I called upon Mr. PICKWICK at his house in Dulwich; and from certain circumstances—such as the appearance of a number of trunks and parcels in the hall, each bearing a label with the following words marked upon it, "*Monsieur Monsieur* PICKWICK, *Voyageur de Paris à Londres*"—I immediately inferred that the object of my visit was just returned from a continental tour. Nor was I mistaken in my supposition. The founder of the "Pickwick Club," which now exists no longer, had violated the promise he had some time since made to himself, and had voluntarily deviated from that tranquil mode of life it was his intention to adopt when his first biographer, "Boz," took leave of him. In fact he had, with that noble disregard for danger and difficulty, and that spirit of enterprise and perseverance, which formed such prominent traits in the character of this extraordinary man, undertaken a journey to Paris —had actually resided some time in the sovereign city of France—and, reckless of fatigue, had retraced his steps at the termination of a certain period, by means of diligence, steam-packet, and coach, to his classic abode at Dulwich.

Without fatiguing the reader with an elaborate description of the astonishment I naturally experienced at the boldness of the idea, the certainty that it had been followed up, and the uncompromising courage of him who had carried it into effect—an idea that prompted him to leave his own fireside, and risk the perils of the ocean, the chance of being overturned in a diligence, and the probability of finding himself amongst a nation of an-

thropophagi in the guise of human beings—without dwelling on this subject, fearful lest the eulogies I offer to my friend might be deemed the dictates of partiality and blind adoration—I shall merely state that the note-book and the *memoranda* of the illustrious Pickwick were placed at my disposal, and that it has become my happy fate to succeed the immortal "Boz" as the biographer of one of the most extraordinary men the present or any other age has produced.

In conclusion, gentle reader, allow me to remark that if the talented "Boz" have not chosen to enact the part of Mr. Pickwick's biographer in his continental tour, it is not my fault. The field was open to him who had so well and so successfully traced the progress of that great man during his travels in England; and as it is now my destiny to compile and put in order the notes taken by him abroad, and reduce them to a systematic narrative, I cannot do otherwise than pledge myself for the sincerity and impartiality with which I shall execute the, to me, pleasing task.

CHAPTER I.

A CONSIDERABLE SENSATION ON THE QUAY AT CALAIS; ITS CAUSE AND OTHER PARTICULARS INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH CERTAIN ILLUSTRIOUS CHARACTERS.

At an unusual hour in the morning of a very foggy and disagreeable day in the month of November, 1834, a crowd of washed and unwashed — English and French — male and female — residents in, or visitors to, the eminently respectable town of Calais, was assembled upon the quay where the steam-vessels generally land their passengers. Had the motley group met on the Grand Place, one might have fancied that the cause of congregation was a political ebullition, or the arrival of an itinerant juggler—either of which occurrences is understood to afford an essential interest to the French in general. But on this occasion the quay was the point of *rendezvous;* and as two or three hundred people seldom meet together for the purpose of gazing upon the sea, which is almost the same as gazing upon nothing, when there are no ships to attract attention, we must suppose that a more important object called them thither.

The fact of the matter was, that a king's messenger, on his way to Paris, in the company of a bag full of sheets of writing-paper, with much profound diplomatic lore scribbled thereon, had informed the waiter of Dessin's Hotel the day before the one on which these memoirs commence, that an illustrious personage, accompanied by his servant and two friends, intended to cross the water on the following morning; for which purpose he had already arrived as far as Dover, his habitual residence having lately been in the neighbourhood of London. M. Dessin's waiter, being gifted with just so much curiosity as to originate the question, inquired who the illustrious traveller might be; and when the magic name of Pickwick was breathed in his ear by the important king's messenger, he immediately communicated the intelligence to his comrades in the kitchen, whence the news

forthwith spread like wildfire through the town, and inspired the *conducteur* of a diligence with the notable resolution of performing his journey to Paris in one hour less time than usual, in order to carry the joyful tidings to the French metropolis as early as possible.

At about ten o'clock A. M., a small boat, rowed by two stout sailors, and containing two or three other individuals seated at the stern, was seen slowly moving up the harbour against a strong tide. A great and visible agitation immediately pervaded the crowd assembled upon the port, and a few respectably dressed Englishmen, in dirty shooting-jackets and battered hats, immediately exclaimed, "Here is the immortal Pickwick!" But as the bark drew nearer to the quay, it was ascertained that it was merely a fishing-boat filled with herrings, and the crew, and curiosity thus remained ungratified for a short space longer.

No sooner had the excitement caused by this false alarm subsided, than it was rumoured that a courier had only a few moments back galloped into the town at a tremendous rate, his horse foaming at the mouth, and himself covered with mud; and report moreover declared that the said courier had been despatched from Boulogne to assure the mayor and worthy inhabitants of Calais that Mr. Pickwick and his followers had landed at the port of the former town. This was, however, speedily contradicted, it being satisfactorily ascertained that the swift horseman was merely a master-butcher of Boulogne in search of a runaway apprentice.

It cannot be wondered at if these disappointments created a painful suspense, and gave a keener edge to the curiosity of the assembled multitude. It has indeed been subsequently whispered that the opportunities were eagerly sought and turned to advantage by two or three individuals, who, without being actually on the list of conveyancers, proved themselves to be very skilful ones, in the removal of sundry pocket-handkerchiefs, &c.; and it is no less a fact calculated to startle and shame London practitioners in the inns of court, that the business was most effectually done without deed or document, and in such perfect tranquillity and secresy, that the property was duly conveyed from one individual to another unknown at the moment to the principal party concerned.

When suspense and anxiety were at their utmost, the smoke of a steam-packet was perceived in the distance, sea-ward, and beyond the long range of sand-hills that skirts the coast. A momentary feeling of indescribable awe seized upon the crowd, and then a long and simultaneous shout expressed the fondness of the anticipation that was to be found in every breast. At the same moment the hats of several private individuals stationed amongst the multitude were propelled with violence over their eyes; and this facetious display of a generally prevalent good feeling on the occasion, was considered the most beautiful and affecting portion of the welcome awaiting the arrival of him who had filled worlds with his fame. These instances of extreme hilarity were, however, objected to by certain selfish and discontented persons—a circumstance admirably calculated to illustrate the ingratitude of the world, and the jealousy existing between all truly great men.

The steam-vessel shortly hove in sight, and glided rapidly over the

still waters of the harbour "jist like a hanimal of real life," as an English gentleman, quoting Byron, and taking a short black pipe from his mouth, remarked to a friend on the occasion. The packet at length came along-side the quay, and every neck was elongated, and every eye was dilated, and every elbow was exactly fitted into the *vacuum* between the ribs of a neighbour, in the general excitement caused by the desire to ascertain if Mr. Pickwick were really on board the vessel.

Unconscious of the honours awaiting him—calm and reflective, as was his wont—clad in the usual way—with the well-known black gaiters—the low hat—the spectacles—and the eye-glass—and near the helm—stood the great man whom hundreds had assembled to gaze upon. On his right was the sleek and well-conditioned Tracy Tupman, whose eye still loved to wander over the handsome features of the fair sex, and whose gold chain had almost entirely disappeared from the sphere of his visual rays, beneath the extensive silk waistcoat. On Mr. Pickwick's left hand was the young friend who had partaken of all that illustrious man's former dangers, difficulties, and perils, and who had equally shared in the renown that had attended success. But time and matrimony had done much for Nathaniel Winkle. The sporting dress was discarded, and a black coat, somewhat loose at the waist, with black trowsers and a striped silk stock, replaced the conspicuous habiliments he once had delighted in. Behind this interesting group was stationed Mr. Samuel Weller, with an open great-coat and several capes over a new suit of livery, and the same cunning smile, and air of indifference, that were the characteristics of Tony Weller's son.

No sooner did the vessel touch the quay than the captain, who was mounted on one of the paddle-boxes, cried out something to the man at the helm—and a sailor on board cried out something to a sailor on shore—and ropes were thrown in all directions—and the captain insisted upon turning the vessel before any one could be permitted to land—and the valve opened with a terrific noise—and a tremendous shout arose amongst the crowd—and the name of "Pickwick" was echoed far and wide, to the astonishment of a couple of gendarmes and two or three custom-house officers, who were so barbarously ignorant of civilized matters as to be entirely unacquainted with the nomenclature of one whose scientific researches and philanthropic feelings had materially benefitted mankind.

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, in a species of trepidation; "one would really have thought they mentioned my name!"

"No—did they, though?" cried Mr. Winkle, turning very pale.

"I think so," returned Mr. Pickwick, casting an anxious glance at the motley crowd.

"And so they did, Sir," said Sam Weller, touching his hat; "and a preshus queer set they appears to be, if von may judge by fust appearances, as the vite man said to his-self ven he got among the selvidges vich made a fire to eat him. That 'ere gen'leman in the spatterdashes and lily benjamin, vith a 'ansome castor as ain't got no crown, is a crying his-self hoarse."

"This is very singular — very singular, indeed!" remarked Mr Pickwick.

"The French is wery notorious for their vay o' takin' leave, Sir,' said Mr. Weller, again joining in the conversation, and touching his hat periodically; "and p'rhaps they isn't more partickler, as the sayin' is, in the vay in vich they velcomes a forinner to Frogland."

"But I think—indeed, I am almost sure," suggested Mr. Pickwick, hazarding an opinion with all his native diffidence and modesty, "that there are a great many English amongst the crowd here assembled."

"Singular costumes the fish-girls have!" observed Mr. Tupman—"or else they would not be bad-looking."

"Tupman, my dear fellow," said Mr. Pickwick, sternly, "let us think of our safety for the present, and talk of—but, Winkle, my good friend, what is the matter with you—are you unwell?"

"Oh! no—not at all," returned Mr. Winkle, casting a glance of extreme horror and suspicion at the gendarmes who stood in front of the crowd.

"Beg pardon, Sir," said Sam, stepping forward and addressing himself to Mr. Pickwick, "but don't you think 'twould be adwisable to order the skipper o' this 'ere wessel to putt us down on t'other side o' the vay?"

"Oh, do!" cried Mr. Winkle, imploringly.

"Why, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, in a tone of bland appeal, "do you really think there is any danger?"

"Do you see them 'ere Johnny Darmies, with their cock-hats and black mustashes?" demanded Mr. Weller; "an' if so be your wisual rays does 'appen to en-counter them gen'lemen, p'rhaps you'd also con-sider that mob, and then assure me if there isn't mischief meant, as the Hindian remarked to his friend ven they met the alligator."

"Are those soldiers French police officers, then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, in a hurried tone of voice.

"They air, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, seriously; "the man at the hel-em assured me that sich vos the fact; and a French Johnny Darmy 'ould think as much o' spitting a fellow-Christian through the guts as a French sugger 'ould care about running another through vith his bagginet."

"You don't say so, Sam!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, edging behind Mr. Tupman, and trembling violently—with the cold, as he subsequently informed his companions.

"Dear me, how they shout!" cried Mr. Pickwick, alluding to the assembled crowd, whose combined hundreds of lungs sent forth most vehement tokens of applause, to the utter astonishment of Mr. Pickwick and his followers. Their terror was, however, speedily dissipated by the assurances of the captain, to whom Mr. Pickwick thought it right to appeal for protection.

"Sir," said the captain respectfully, "that crowd has assembled to welcome the landing of Mr. Pickwick; and as such is your name—"

"Right for vonce, old feller," interrupted Mr. Weller. "Samivel Pickvick, Esk-vire, o' Dulwich Lodge."

"Silence, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick. "Pray proceed, Sir."

"I have very little to say, Sir," continued the captain, casting a look of angry defiance at the imperturbable Mr. Weller; "merely that all this row is to honour your arrival in Calais; and those gen-

darmes and custom-house officers are always present at the landing of passengers, in order to conduct them to that little wooden house you see yonder, to be searched. Don't be afraid, Sir—there is no danger;" and with this consolatory injunction, which took a considerable weight off the mind of Mr. Winkle, who, as he immediately informed Mr. Pickwick, had only felt anxious on that gentleman's account, the captain hurried to another part of the vessel to issue some necessary orders.

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, after a pause, "this is very flattering—but very disagreeable—"

"As the sugger said, ven he vent out to be shot, accompanied by the whole rigment and muffled drums," observed Mr. Weller.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, "you perceive those carriages standing there?"

"Wery perceptible they air, Sir," returned Sam.

"Well, then, Sam," continued his master, "the moment the ladder is put down—and they are about it now, I see—hasten on shore, and procure us one of those vehicles to conduct us to the hotel.

"Certainly, Sir;" and Mr. Weller was about to execute the commission, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he said, "Beg pardon, Sir; but wouldn't it be more adwisable to state the name of the hottel in question?"

"Meurice's hotel," suggested Mr. Winkle.

"Where there is a pretty chambermaid," added Mr. Tupman—a piece of information he had collected at Dover.

"Am I to make that latter statement, Sir?" said Mr. Weller, touching his hat.

"No—I think not, Sam," answered Mr. Pickwick, after a moment's deliberation. "I don't think it can be necessary, unless Tupman particularly wishes it."

"Oh! no—not I!" said that gentleman, "provided the information be correct."

"Wery good!" cried Mr. Weller; and in a moment he stood upon the quay.

"I speaks English, young man," said a shabby-genteel individual, in an oil-skin cap; "what hotel do you want?"

"Wery 'appy to 'ear you speaks English," observed Sam, eyeing his new friend from top to toe; "and wery satisfact'ry it must be to the English nobility as wisits these parts."

"What hotel do you want?" enquired the man, who was a commissioner.

"Dessin's, to be sure!" roared another commissioner, or touter.

"Quillacq's!" exclaimed a third.

"Bourbon Condé!" cried a fourth.

"Many inwitations exhibits welcome," said Sam. "But it's neither Dessing's, nor Killack's, nor Bare-bone country, that ull suit us, 'cos ve air partickler. Howsomever, if any o' you wery obliging gen'lemen 'ull jist inform me vich o' them there helegant painted consarns vill take us to Murrisses hot-tel, the adwise vill be wery thankfully received, as the patient said to the quack doctor."

"I say, Jem, here's a start!" exclaimed a short gentleman in a long

black coat and hair cap; "this here chap's a-come to puzzle the Frenchmen."

"He must get up infernally early in the morning, then, Bill," observed the individual to whom the above remark was addressed.

"It is jist vithin the range o' possibility to do you, old touch-and-go," retorted Sam, "perwided I doesn't go to bed at all."

In the mean time the carriage, which belonged to Meurice's hotel, and the coachman of which had been duly advertised, by some commissioner, of Mr. Weller's demand, drove up to the very spot where the passengers were already landing.

"Well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, when that faithful domestic descended the accommodation-ladder, and once more stood upon the deck of the vessel, "is the carriage ready?

"If them 'ere green painted boards, vith leather aperns attached to 'em, standing on four veels, and dragged by two such beastesses as I never see, is a carriage, Sir," returned Sam, "then that *is* the heckipage."

"Oh! very well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, benignly smiling at his servant's humour, and putting himself at the head of the little detachment of his followers to ascend the accommodation-ladder. But no sooner had Mr. Pickwick set his left foot on the last bar of the ladder, and grasped the railing with his right hand, than another tremendous shout arose to welcome his arrival; and had not Mr. Weller given his revered and respected master a compulsive and impelling shove behind, it is more than probable that Mr. Pickwick would have remained standing at the bottom of the ladder till the arrival of the high tide should have enabled him to step on shore, by raising the vessel to a level with the quay.

Now it happened that there was present, on this memorable occasion, an English sporting character, who writes a good deal on sporting matters, and has created for himself a species of reputation in the sporting world,—for in no other sphere could he, nor did he ever shine:—and, as there is a kind of freemasonry existing between all great or literary men, the said sporting character deemed it his duty to make a speech in honour of Mr. Pickwick's arrival. Animated by so noble a resolution, and having already informed a few of his elegant English acquaintances resident in Calais, that such was his intention, the said sporting character stepped jauntily forward, and confronting the bewildered Mr. Pickwick in the very path which the crowd formed by respectfully drawing away on either side, began as follows:—

"Most illustrious and welcome Pickwick,—all hail on the shores of France! and when I say 'all hail!' it is not the voice of an humble individual that pronounces these words. No,—for the Duke of Orleans has noticed me at Chantilly,—and, what is more, he has spoken to me! But,

'clarorum virorum facta moresque'

must be related by other tongues, and celebrated by other pens, than mine. If I have obtained a considerable reputation in the world,

'ære perennius,'

and if my writings have produced moral effects upon the principal nations in Europe—an observation made to me by the Duke of ——,

when he passed through Calais a few days ago—I am not vain—I am no egotist, Mr. Pickwick;—but ever since the times when

'arma virumque cano—'"

"No—no, my dear fellow," said a voice from behind, and which emanated from the sporting character's prompter,—"say, 'since the times when

'Inclytus Albertus, doctissimus atque disertus—.'"

"Ah! true!" ejaculated the sporting character; and he was about to continue his very edifying oration, when Mr. Weller, who strongly suspected "the sporting character to be a downright humbug,"—as he expressed himself to Mr. Winkle, with a peculiar *naïveté*—interrupted the importance of the proceeding by stepping up to Mr. Pickwick, touching his hat, and saying, "Beg pardon, Sir, but the ekipage is a-vaiting; and if we stand 'ere all day a-listening to that chap in the seedy black coat, vith his prompter behind him, we shall never get to our journey's end, as the conwict said, ven the pop'lace circumwented the cart, as he vos a-going to be hanged."

When Mr. Weller had delivered himself of this peculiarly long string of observations, he gently eased Mr. Pickwick into the vehicle that was waiting for his reception, thrust Mr. Winkle after Mr. Pickwick, and pushed Mr. Tracy Tupman lightly upon the other two; having performed which feat, he himself mounted the dickey, seated himself next to the coachman, and the horses having been duly whipped and anathematised by both parties, the carriage was borne away to the little wooden house indicated by the captain, amidst the shouts, screams, yells, and applause of the heterogeneous mob, every individual of which fancied that the most satisfactory note of applause was the highest note his voice could reach. The examination was brief and speedily accomplished at the little wooden house, and was only interrupted for a moment by the civilities which Mr. Weller thought necessary to heap upon the custom-house officer who investigated the pockets of Mr. Pickwick's functionary. The custom-house officer did not, however, exactly comprehend the nature of Mr. Weller's apostrophe, and the party was about to resume their places in or out of the carriage as before, when the partially suppressed enthusiasm of the mob broke forth, and the respect that the assembled French and English jointly and individually entertained for the illustrious name of Pickwick, was immediately demonstrated by that gentleman being lightly flung upon the shoulders of some half-dozen of the strongest and stoutest present; and in this manner was he borne to Meurice's hotel, Mr. Nathaniel Winkle, Mr. Tracy Tupman, and Mr. Samuel Weller following in the rear.

CHAPTER II.

MR. SAMUEL WELLER'S OPINIONS ON DIVERS MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE FRENCH, AND THE PARTICULARS OF A FRENCH LUNCHEON, OR DEJEUNER-A-LA-FOURCHETTE.

It was a most interesting spectacle to see Mr. Pickwick mounted on the shoulders of his supporters, endeavouring to sit easily in one of

the very worst of positions, and his expressive countenance lighted up with smiles of "pleasing pain." His eyes beamed with philanthropy and kindness on the respectable multitude around him; and an occasional sigh escaped his mighty breast, when the sight of some tatterdemalion awakened feelings of commiseration and pity in his bosom. He was not, however, doomed to be very grievously afflicted on this occasion; for we are confidently assured that out of three hundred people, twenty-seven were dressed in decent coats, and upwards of forty in fustian shooting jackets. There was, moreover, a brilliant display of gaberdines, aprons, and shirt-sleeves.

A deputation, volunteered and self-elected, of about two dozen small boys, having prepared the inmates of the Hotel Meurice, for the arrival of the illustrious visitors, the whole house was immediately involved in confusion and riot: and when the procession reached the entrance of the hotel, and precipitated Mr. Pickwick on his legs, amidst thunders of applause, an army of domestics,—cooks, waiters, chambermaids, ostlers, &c.—was drawn up to welcome the great man and his illustrious followers. Mr. Pickwick would have addressed the multitude, had not two reasons—the first of which was suggested by circumstances, and the latter by Mr. Winkle—prevented him.

"You are right, my dear friend," said Mr. Pickwick to Mr. Winkle, without a moment's reflection: "the crowd is so noisy that I should not be heard—and, as you very properly observed, the half of it is composed of Frenchmen, who would not understand me."

"Thank God, Arabella is not with us!" said Mr. Winkle, hastily, and turning up his eyes to heaven with an extraordinary air of piety.

"Why so?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, looking sternly for a moment at his young friend.

"Because Tupman is really indecent in his conduct," responded Mr. Winkle. "He has already entered into conversation with the pretty chambermaid in the yard of a public hotel."

"Sam!" said Mr. Pickwick, abruptly, so soon as he had satisfied himself of the truth of Mr. Winkle's statement.

"Sir!" said Mr. Weller, touching his hat.

"Tell Mr. Tupman to follow us immediately into the coffee-room: the eyes of the whole town are upon us.—Waiter, show us to the Coffee-room."

The waiter, who had been lurking about the new-comers ever since the first moment Mr. Pickwick alighted in the yard from the shoulders of his bearers, and who happened to speak very good English, instantly obeyed the command, and ushered Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle to the coffee-room, whither they were shortly followed by Mr. Tupman, who wore a cunning smile upon his countenance, and Mr. Samuel Weller. It is almost needless to remark that the illustrious party took off their hats to the crowd that thronged the entrance of the hotel, as they withdrew from the presence of that respectable congregation; and it may also be perfectly well understood that the members of the said congregation were peculiarly delighted with their morning's amusement, and separated for the purpose of repairing each to the *café* or English pot-house he was in the habit of frequenting. The sporting character in vain looked for an invitation to dinner with Mr. Pickwick and his friends, as a reward for his eloquent oration; and at

length withdrew in disgust, accompanied by a broken-down parson, who boasted of being the illegitimate son of some lord, and two or three other seedy-looking representatives of the great English nation, to a low tavern, where his egotism made him an important person for the remainder of the day.

"Well, after all," said Mr. Winkle, as the travellers seated themselves opposite a cheerful fire in the coffee-room, "there is not so much difference between an English and a French town."

"Bricks is bricks, Sir, all the vorld over," observed Mr. Weller, relapsing a moment from his occupation of hanging up great-coats, hats, &c., on the pegs attached to the walls.

"You will find the manners and customs somewhat different, Winkle," said Mr. Pickwick, "before you have been here long."

"'Tis a lost country, Sir," said Mr. Weller, with a doleful shake of the head.

"A lost country, Sam!" cried Mr. Pickwick, in astonishment.

"Yes, Sir—a lost country—a nation vithout principle, Sir," replied Mr. Weller, earnestly: "since a period vich they calls the evolution, Sir, there has n't been no manners in France; there 's no sich thing as a gen'leman known—a servant is as good as his mas'er, Sir,—for they air all equal, as the nobleman said, ven he give the chimbly-sveep a cheer (chair), and told him to make his-self at home."

"I am afraid, Sam," suggested Mr. Pickwick, mildly, "that your account is rather exaggerated."

"Quite impossible to be incorrect, Sir," returned Sam, "ven it vos the skipper o' that 'ere wessel in vich ve come, as took the trouble o' hedificating me on that head. 'The French is greatly to be pitied, Sir,' says I, 'if there isn't no gen'lemen among 'em'.—'They don't know the walley o' liberty,' says the captain, mournfully.—'No more they does, Sir,' says I, 'since they've a-made their-selves all equal.'—'Wery common to see a private sugger arm-in-arm vith a officer,' says the captain, 'and that isn't discipline. But it's no vonder,' continues he more sorrowf'ly than afore, 'as they've a-bolished flogging in the army.'—He vould a-gone on vith his argiments, but his okkipation obleeged him to go into a hole beneath the biler for a moment, and Mr. Vinkle vanted a glass o' brandy-an'-vater, vich unforeseen accidents caused us to separate, as the scientific gen'leman said ven he fell from the parishoot."

"Well, we shall see," observed Mr. Pickwick, doubtfully, when his domestic had made an end of speaking; and at that moment the waiter entered to lay the cloth for luncheon.

"What wine will you take, Sir?" inquired the waiter, addressing Mr. Pickwick.

"Madeira, by all means," cried Mr. Tupman, who had hitherto remained silent, his imagination wandering to the pretty chamber-maid.

I cannot recommend the Madeira, Sir," said the waiter, for the very simple reason that there was none in the cellar.

"Well, let us have some Sherry, then," returned Mr. Tupman.

"Nor the Sherry, Sir," responded the waiter.

"In that case we must put up with Port," observed Mr. Pickwick.

"You will find the Port *very* thick, Sir, I'm afraid," remonstrated the waiter.

"What *can* we have, then?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, opening his eyes behind his spectacles in undisguised astonishment.

"Here is the card, Sir," returned the waiter, placing a long list of long names into Mr. Pickwick's hands.

"I do not understand French," said that gentleman; "but you, Tupman, I fancy, can do a little in this way."

"I understand—that is, when at school—oh! yes," stammered Mr. Tracy Tupman, "I am far from ignorant—but these names, waiter, are new ones, I fancy."

"Not many centuries old, Sir," observed the waiter.

"The French use the word *centuries* for *weeks*," said Mr. Tupman in a whisper to his leader.

"Oh, indeed!" murmured Mr. Pickwick, poking the fire. "After all, I think it would be better to leave it to the waiter."

"Thank you, Sir," said the waiter, gliding almost imperceptibly away from the room, and resolved in his own mind to furnish the most expensive wine in the cellar.

Mr. Weller, who had disappeared on the entrance of the waiter, now returned to the coffee-room where his masters were seated, and shuffled uneasily round the table, as if he were desirous of unburdening his mind of some oppressive weight.

"What is the matter, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick, at length, pitying the embarrassed situation of his domestic: "has any thing new occurred?"

"Beg pardon, Sir," returned Sam, "but I'm just a-come from the kitchen—and a more curioser place I never see."

"Indeed, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick; "what is there so remarkable?"

"In that 'ere kitchen, Sir," said Sam, seriously, "there's nothink that's common to a kitchen in England. Fust, Sir, there are half-a-dozen man-cooks, vith vite night-caps and aperns; and each appears to be the captain o' ten or twelve different sarsepans—all of bright copper—ranged, soldier-vise, on a large stove: and then the contents o' them 'ere sarsepans, gen'lemen, is astonishing to a degree. I opened the lid o' von, unbeknown to the cook as vos the presiding diwinity o' that quarter, and sure enough, I sees a partridge a-stooing vith weggitables and sassages. Says I to myself, 'This is rayther queer,' as the banker observed, ven he looked at the cheque as vos forged. —' P'rhaps you'd like to larn French cookery, young man?' said von o' the vaiters, vith a vink o' slyness to von o' the varming-pans."

"To one of the warming pans!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, somewhat angry, for he recollected that the unfortunate subject of warming-pans had served as material evidence against him, in the mouth of Serjeant Buz-fuz on the occasion of his memorable trial.

"Hallegorical, Sir—purely hallegorical, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, "as the critic said to the author, ven he cut up his writings."

"Well—to return to the kitchen, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, whose momentary anger was speedily subsided, and who entertained some vague idea that his domestic alluded to a chambermaid, although the synonyme was at first rather obscure.

"If it suit your con-wenience, Sir," continued Sam, "to listen to my wagaries, I don't know no hobjection to my communicating of them. So to continue. 'P'rhaps you 'ud like to larn French cookery?' said

the vaiter.—'Wery much obleeged, young lily-vite,' said I; 'but had rayther let it alone, as the monkey said of the hot poker.'—'Would you like jist for to taste o' this 'ere dish, Mr. Veller?' persewed the vaiter, for he 'd larnt my name from the top of my band-box; and, taking the kiver off von o' the sarsepans, he showed me a piece o' biled beef done to rags. 'Time to take that off,' says I.—'No sich thing,' said he, looking at the clock: 'must stew till six.'—'And vot's in that 'ere large kaldron?' said I, not wenturing on a look of astonishment, as I vos afeard of 'traying my ignorance.—'Stewed weal,' said the vaiter; and thereupon he took off the lid of the copper sarsepan, and showed me a piece o' meat vith bits o' fat hanging about it on all sides. This he called a flich-and-go: but I s'pose 'twas his imperence.—'Pray do you use pertaties in France?' said I.—'Certainly,' said my friend the vaiter; 'here is some prime uns,' and sure enow I seed some pertaties cut into slices, and kivered over with butter and parsely, jist ready to sarve up."

"Singular!" said Mr. Pickwick, who had listened with deep attention to Mr. Weller's recital;—"very singular! But what did I tell you just now, Winkle?"

Mr. Winkle was about to reply, when the entrance of the waiter and the luncheon attracted the attention of the three gentlemen to the repast which was now brought in -and which was to be the first that either had ever yet eaten of in France.

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, "why—this is a dinner!"

"*Dejeuner à la fourchette*," cried the waiter; and having ranged half-a-dozen dishes upon the table, he proceeded to draw the corks of three bottles of wine, and place them (the bottles, not the corks) upon the same convivial board.

"Meat-pie," said Mr. Pickwick, uncovering the dish opposite to him, and glancing curiously at a little fabric of paste standing in a very little piece of crockery-ware.

"*Vol-au-vent aux grenouilles!*" observed the waiter.

"Mutton-chops and vegetables," cried Mr. Tupman, disencumbering his dish of its tegument.

"*Cotelettes à la jardiniere*," said the waiter.

"Hash and young lobsters," exclaimed Mr. Winkle.

"*Tête de veau à la tortue, et des ecrevisses*," chaunted the waiter in a sing-song tone of voice."

"Chopped cabbages," said Mr. Weller, as he lifted up the cover of a dish containing spinage. "And some o' them identical pertaties," continued Sam, disclosing the contents of another plate, "consarning vich I vos hedificated just now. Kolliflour and melted butter is the third—and a' admirable display they air too. Good appetite, gen'lemen, as the skipper said to the sailors ven they vos short of perwisions, and he give 'em each a ounce o' salt-pork."

"This chicken-pie is excellent," said Mr. Pickwick, helping himself a second time to the attractive dish before him:—"I never tasted any thing so tender. You really can eat the very bones!"

"Indeed!" observed Mr. Winkle; "I'll trouble you for a piece, then."

"With pleasure," returned Mr. Pickwick. "Tupman—try this dish of mine?"

"I don't care if I do," said Mr. Tupman; and having been copiously

helped, he as liberally indulged himself in the consumption of the delicate food.

"Winkle, a glass of wine," said Mr. Pickwick.

"With pleasure," said Mr. Winkle; and the Burgundy was accordingly poured out and drank.

"Elder-wine— is it not?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, emptying his glass, and smacking his lips with a peculiar relish.

"Burgundy, Sir," said the waiter—"best Burgundy."

"I was just going to tell you so," observed Mr. Winkle; "and a very excellent glass of wine it is."

In the meantime Mr. Pickwick had helped himself a third time to the pie before him, and was about to commence a vigorous attack thereon, when his attention was suddenly attracted to Mr. Tupman, whose features were screwed up in a most extraordinary manner, and seemed to indicate every appearance of a desire to vomit on the part of that gentleman.

"Tupman—are you ill?' exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, laying down his knife and fork, and helping himself to a glass of wine in a momentary fit of absence caused by the alarming situation of his friend.

"Pray, don't be sick, Tupman—now, don't, there's a good fellow," cried Mr. Winkle, in amiable commiseration of that gentleman's indisposition.

"Oh, that pie!" groaned Mr. Tupman, retching most frightfully, while the tears ran down his cheeks.

"Waiter!" said Mr. Pickwick in an angry tone of voice: then, fearful that his rising choler might ovecome the equanimity of his temper, he tossed off the wine he had poured out in order to allow himself time for reflection.

"Yes—Sir," said the waiter, stepping forward from the side-table where he was stationed.

"What is in that pie, waiter?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes—what *is* in it?" demanded Mr. Winkle, menacingly.

"In mercy, waiter—what was it made of?" murmured Mr. Tupman, whose face was now ghastly pale.

"Made of, Sir?" repeated the waiter.

"Yes—made of," cried Mr. Winkle, very angrily, and in a tone which seemed to assure the waiter that he would not be trifled with.

"Young frogs' legs, I fancy, Sir," said the waiter, with the utmost coolness; and having assured himself of the truth of his statement by a glance at the dish, he added, "Yes, Sir—they *are* frogs' legs."

In one moment Mr. Pickwick's lap received the contents of Mr. Tupman's stomach, and Mr. Winkle rushed towards the bell, and pulled it with all his might, although the waiter was in the room. As for Mr. Pickwick, he was so bewildered by the communication made by the waiter, the idea of having eaten frogs' legs, and the certainty of having been made a hand-bason of by Mr. Tupman, that, in a moment of venial desperation, he seized the nearest bottle upon the table, and having poured out a tumbler of its contents, drank it at a draught.

Mr. Weller, who had left the apartment only a few minutes before the commencement of this extraordinary scene to look after his own luncheon, hastened to the coffee-room the moment he heard the bell ringing with all the violence that Mr. Winkle's arms could impart to

the wire. When he beheld the confusion that prevailed, and heard Mr. Winkle vituperating the waiter as a sort of accompaniment to the music he was making with the bell, it immediately occurred to Mr. Weller's mind that the said waiter had been abusing his revered master; and, without any more ado, he communicated to the unoffending waiter's nose so fierce a blow, and followed it up by another on the chest to such purpose, that the unfortunate waiter fell over the table, and scattered the remnants of the luncheon on the floor. The other domestics of the hotel rushed into the coffee-room in a body, just at the moment when their fellow-servant kissed the ground, and were about to inflict summary and condign punishment on Mr. Weller. But their pugnacious determinations were stopped by the interference of Mr. Pickwick, who, with extraordinary promptitude, rose from his chair like a doll leaping out of a child's box by means of a spring; and holding back Mr. Winkle with one hand, while he waved the other over his head, he proceeded to address the servile crew. His eloquence produced an immediate effect—the matter was explained to the satisfaction of all parties—and the waiter undertook to pardon Mr. Weller, on a small *douceur* being slipped into his hand, but not before Mr. Winkle had informed the domestics that it was very lucky they were thus pacifically inclined, or they would have known the reason why. Peace being thus restored, Mr. Tupman hastened to bed, having only just strength enough remaining to desire the pretty chambermaid to follow him with the warming-pan.

The domestics retired to the kitchen—Mr. Pickwick changed his trowsers and washed himself—which ceremony being performed, he and Mr. Winkle, having declined to eat any more luncheon, indemnified themselves with a hot glass of excellent brandy-and water, by the coffee-room fire. The waiter was summoned, after Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle had held a consultation, at which Mr. Pickwick presided in due form, relative to the dinner; and it being thoroughly understood that no anti-Anglican meats were to be served up, the waiter was desired to have that repast on table at six o'clock, and to call Mr. Tupman at five.

CHAPTER III.

MR. WELLER'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE.—THE READER IS INTRODUCED TO A YOUNG GENTLEMAN WHO IS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE WORLD.—MR. WELLER'S ADVENTURE AT THE THEATRE.

When Mr. Samuel Weller had partaken of a copious repast in the kitchen of Meurice's hotel, he repaired to the bed-room which was destined for his reception. Being armed with writing materials and a glass of brandy-and-water, he took a seat at the table, and prepared himself to compose an epistle to his beloved spouse, whom he had left behind him at Dulwich Lodge.

"Wery particklerly good you air," observed Sam, apostrophising the brandy-and-water, and smacking his lips after a long draught of the tempting beverage; "and may ve meet as frequently as con-wenient, as the gen'leman said to the pus vich he foun' in the street. An' now for this 'ere little *he*-pistle of mine," continued Sam—"and mind ve

put in as much—or p'rhaps rayther more than the vaiter's informed us of—not forgetting about the vine and the sugger's trowsers."

With these words Mr. Weller applied himself manfully to the task, and never left off till he had accomplished the following letter.

"*Kallis, france. novvember* 12.

"Mi dear mari,

"Ve got safe to france, and a nation quere place it is. the houses alone is like inglish houses. but the metes is quite other. so is the vimen. they givd us frogg's leggs for lunshun. and Mister tuppman womitted is shair in the guverner's lapp and over is unmenshunables, vithout sain bye or vith yer leve. the guverner mai l a speche on the okkashun vich vos unannymusly applorded by all the servints as vos prezint. and wery much to is creditt it vos tu.

"As ve cum along the rode to dover ve stopp'd at shuter's ill and see the old genelman vich vos in good elth and sperets, he vos a smoakin and drinkin brandi and-vater. he arsk'd wery kind arter you, mari, and the babbies. he hadnt sene nothink of the red-nosd man since he left dorkin, an dusn't vont for to see him agin nayther, as the schuleboy said o' the goast..

"you must ekskuse this bad ritin. but french penns von't spel inglish like inglish vons, and the paper is so thin you dropp sum o' the letters threw on t'other side vich gets on the blottin-paper and is lost in consek-vence. i dus'nt get sich good bakker in france as i does in ingland. and the peple ere alvays drinks vine, cos there's no strong bere. clarit is wery plentifull in this cuntry. and the suggers vears redd briches. the servint gals all vears vite capps an gouns that dus'nt cum lower than their vaistis.

"now, mi dere mari, take cair o' the babbies an o' yerself as is more preshuser still if possible. i don't now ven ve shall be back. butt you now Mister Vinkle tolde his vife that he vould'nt be long avay. and as he's a goin to parris on his father's agincy bisness, an the guverner vent vith him under pretense o' takin care of him tho raly as an ekskuse for sein parris his-self, it is all rite as the eksicushoner said ven he ajusted the corde round the genelman's neck at the old baly.

"take cair o' yerself, mari, and so no more now from yer ever effecshonate usban,

"SAMIVEL VELLER.

"P. s. i forgot to sai that the servint gals vears petticotes altho' their gouns don't cum lower than their vaistises.

"To Missus mari veller. ousekeper. Dullich
"lodge. rezzidents o' Samivell pickvick esk-vire.
"Dullich, nere lundun. by vay o' dover."

"And a wery elgant little he-pistle it is," said Sam, complacently eyeing the effort of his imagination and mental capacity, which will for ever remain a monument of the genius of the Weller family. "Now for a vafer, and to the pos , as the vinning orse said at the races."

Having discussed his brandy-and-water, wafered his letter, and made some little arrangements of a domestic nature in his bed-room, Mr. Weller hastened down stairs, and requested the waiter to show him the way to the post-office—a demand that was immediately complied with by that individual, who had forgotten the black eye, inflicted by Mr. Wel-

ler, in the contemplation of an English sovereign which Mr. Pickwick had administered to his especial comfort.

In the meantime Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle had finished their brandy-and-water, and had looked at their watches to ascertain the hour, and had come to the unanimous conclusion that it was three o'clock, p. m., after a shrewd suspicion, on the part of Mr. Winkle, that there was a difference of at least eight minutes between French and English time. They then discussed their plans as deliberately and business-like as they had before done their brandy-and-water, and resolved, with the conditional consent of Mr. Tupman, to depart for Paris early the following morning by the diligence. The causes of their visit to the French capital—and, indeed, the motives which induced them to leave England after a state of quiescence that had lasted about four years—will be duly unfolded in the progress of these memoirs.

The question now arose, How were they to dispose of their time till six o'clock, the hour at which dinner was ordered? Mr. Pickwick was averse to taking a little walk, a plan of diversion which Mr. Winkle had suggested, as he was in no way anxious to be paraded through the town on the shoulders of a mob; and, despite of his native modesty, he was well aware of the excitement his presence in the streets was calculated to produce. Mr. Winkle then proposed a game of chess or backgammon; but this suggestion was also declined by Mr. Pickwick, who fancied, as he beautifully expressed himself, that it was indecent to have even the appearance of gambling in a public coffee-room. Mr. Winkle, therefore, relapsed into silence, and looked at the fire, and then at the ceiling, and at length hit upon the happy expedient, by way of pass-time, of burning several slips of paper that he found on the mantel. Mr. Pickwick watched Mr. Winkle's motions with a smile; and while the world without fondly deemed those great men to be debating on weighty matters, the great men themselves did nothing more nor less important than divert themselves in a manner at once cheap, innocent, and far from uncommon, thus affording an example eminently calculated to illustrate the folly of speculation with regard to the proceedings of her majesty's ministers in cabinet-council.

A quarter of an hour had elapsed since Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle had looked at their watches as above-mentioned, when the door of the coffee-room was suddenly thrown open, and a young gentleman of about two or three and twenty bounced into the apartment. He was dressed in clothes somewhat the worse for wear; and his closely-buttoned double-waistcoat suffered not a vestige of linen to be seen, probably on account of the chilly weather, against the inclemency of which his head was protected by an old black velvet cap.

Without condescending to shut the door behind him, the stranger walked straight up to the fire-place, pulled the bell with extreme violence, and then, turning his back to the fire, he put his hands behind him, pulled asunder his coat-tails, and whistled an opera air, apparently not having noticed the presence of Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle. The waiter answered the bell with the utmost alacrity; but when he saw that he was summoned by the young gentleman in question, he made a slight grimace, which was not unnoticed by Mr. Pickwick, whose closely observing faculties nothing, however trivial, was known to escape.

"Waiter," said the young gentleman, in a loud authoritative tone of voice, "I dine at home to-day."

"Very good, Sir," observed the waiter, with extreme indifference.

"At six o'clock, waiter—do your hear?" cried the young gentleman.

"Yes, Sir," returned the waiter. "I will inform master of it, Sir."

"And let me have some game, waiter," continued the young gentleman, rendering his voice as commanding as he could, in order to conquer the indifference of the waiter, a task he found by no means easy.

"I'll ask missis, Sir," said the waiter, preparing to leave the room.

"Perhaps these gentlemen dine here too," observed the young man, now, for the first time, affecting to notice Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle.

"We do so—and at the same hour," said Mr. Pickwick mildly.

"Then we'll dine together," exclaimed the young gentleman, without once reflecting that his proposition might not be agreeable.

"Perhaps these gentlemen," began the waiter, "would rather—"

"Oh! with much pleasure," said Mr. Pickwick, interrupting the waiter, and addressing himself to the stranger in allusion to the proposed plan of dining together. The waiter made no farther remark, but walked twice round the room, pretending to dust a couple of chairs on which no one had been seated that day, and to arrange a curtain which had not been touched since he last disposed it in its proper folds; having done which, he glided out of the room.

"You are strangers, gentlemen?" said the young man the moment the waiter had left the apartment.

"We only arrived in France this morning," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"And I have been here six weeks," exclaimed the young gentleman.

"Confounded bore! but have been detained here against my will."

"Bad roads, I suppose," said Mr. Pickwick, "and you did not like to venture upon them?"

"No—curse the roads," replied the stranger. "The fact is, my bankers are in Ireland—the north of Ireland—and I have been kept here waiting for my remittances."

"How very provoking!" ejaculated the kind-hearted Mr. Pickwick.

"Great nuisance," said the young gentleman; "particularly when one has several thousands in his banker's hands."

"Very annoying indeed!" chimed in the equally sympathetic Winkle; "is it not, Pickwick?" he added in a manner requiring corroboration of his assertion.

"Pickwick!" exclaimed the young gentleman, as if he did not already very well know that such was the name of the illustrious individual in whose august presence he stood,—"No!"

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Pickwick mildly; "my name is Pickwick!"

"The deuce! who *would* have thought it?" cried the young gentleman in an ecstacy of joy; and flinging himself upon Mr. Pickwick, he embraced him cordially.

"Dear me—Sir—my dear Sir"—exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, almost smothered, and unable to sustain the entire weight of the enthusiastic stranger—"really, I have not the pleasure—I don't know—"

"A thousand pardons, my dear Sir!" said the young gentleman, at length relinquishing his hold. "I am indeed very imprudent—

hang me if I ain't; but this honour was so unexpected—so unlooked for—taking one so infernally by surprise—"

"No apology, my dear Sir," said Mr. Pickwick with a benignant smile. "And now that you are acquainted with my name—allow me to introduce you to my friend and companion, Mr. Nathaniel Winkle!"

"Winkle!" exclaimed the young gentleman, turning suddenly to that individual, who winced a little, and sate uneasily on his chair, afraid of undergoing a similar series of embracings and huggings to the one already experienced by his great leader; "most happy to know *you* also, Mr. Winkle. My name is Crashem, gentlemen—Adolphus Crashem— son of the general of that name."

"Ah! indeed," said Mr. Pickwick, with a half-bow and placid smile.

"The name must be familiar to *you*," observed Mr. Adolphus Crashem, with peculiar emphasis on the pronoun.

"Not very familiar," rejoined Mr. Pickwick, with an appealing glance at Mr. Winkle. Indeed it would have been very singular if it were; for in the several editions of the army list, Mr. Murray has unaccountably forgotten to mention General Crashem's name.

"Not on very good terms with my father, though—" said the young gentleman. "The old boy has a will of his own, Mr. Pickwick—like all very old men—he is past ninety—and I am his only son. Forty thousand pounds a-year sure—all entailed, and no mistake."

"That is very lucky," observed Mr. Pickwick, alluding to the absence of any irregularity in the nature of the entail.

"No—no—all right in that quarter, thank God," continued Mr. Adolphus Crashem—"right as the mail, my boy. But this old father of mine must needs interfere in my matrimonial intentions—and a very lovely girl—daughter of an illustrious baronet—pines after me at this moment. Don't dare offend the old boy—else quarterly supplies d—d soon cut off, you know;"—and Mr. Crashem smiled in a peculiarly cunning manner.

"Ah! that's it, is it?" said Mr. Winkle, with an equally cunning smile and chuckle, probably occasioned by certain reminiscences, the nature of which the reader is already acquainted with.

"Sir William Grinwell, of Grinwell Park, Somersetshire, is the father of my intended," said Mr. Crashem; "and a devilish good fellow he is too. Was arrested six months ago for a cool fifty thousand—lost at play—on a bill, mind—and he stumped down in a jiffey to prevent my father from knowing it. Will give his daughter four times as much on her wedding-day—without settlement, too—that's the best of it, ha! ha! ha!"

At this moment the waiter entered the room, and informed Mr. Adolphus Crashem that the landlord of the hotel would be glad to say two words to him in the passage. Mr. Adolphus Crashem made a wry face at this communication, which private reasons, however, did not allow him to neglect. He accordingly went to meet the landlord in the passage, as he was desired.

"Nice young man, that," said Mr. Pickwick, when he and Mr. Winkle were again alone.

"And devilish well connected, too," observed Mr. Winkle.

"Brilliant prospects he appears to have," continued Mr. Pickwick.

"I should like to be only half as well off," returned Mr. Winkle, suppressing a sigh of envy.

"Dear me, how loud they are talking in the passage," cried Mr. Pickwick; "I can almost hear what they say!"

"He is most likely blowing the landlord up for something," suggested Mr. Winkle.

"How foolish of hotel-keepers not to know their own interests, and try to keep a good customer!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Well, then—for to-day only—and recollect it is the last!" exclaimed a loud voice in the passage, which was not the voice of Mr. Adolphus Crashem; upon which the door again opened, and that gentleman entered the room, having concluded his *tête-à-tête* with the landlord.

"Shocking bad they build their wainscots in France," said Mr. Crashem, when he had once more settled himself before the fire.

"Do they indeed?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, glancing at the wall.

"Yes;—why, couldn't you hear what passed between us in the passage?" demanded the young gentleman, somewhat anxiously.

"Oh! no," replied Mr. Winkle; "not in the least."

"Well, then, they ain't so *very* bad," remarked Mr. Adolphus Crashem, brightening up, and wondering in his own mind how the landlord's voice did not penetrate through the wainscot which was a couple of inches thick. "Talking of wainscots," continued Mr. Crashem, "puts me in mind of a singular story connected with a wainscot. When I was *attaché* to the English ambassador at Constantinople, I lodged and boarded with a Turkish family, and fell desperately in love with the old Turk's fifteenth daughter, Amima. One day I was in my private study, writing some letters to the ministers of foreign affairs of France and Spain—and very tedious work it was, by the bye—when I heard a female voice talking in the next room. I listened—I am horribly jealous, gentlemen—and I soon discovered that my adored Amima was hearkening to the love-tales of a favoured rival. Dash me, if I knew what to do! I seized a pistol, and pointing it against the wainscot that divided my room from the one where this pleasant scene was being enacted—guided only by the sound of my rival's voice—I fired! A heavy thing tumbled to the ground, and a loud shriek rent the air. I rushed into the room, and found my rival a corpse on the floor!"

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick; "how horrible! But what became of the young lady?"

"Her father turned her out of doors, and she became a dancing-girl," replied Mr. Adolphus Crashem. "She afterwards renounced her creed, and married a Jew."

"Singular episode in Turkish life," remarked Mr. Winkle.

"And highly illustrative of their manners, too," exclaimed Mr. Crashem.

"So I should imagine," observed Mr. Pickwick, whose kindness of disposition led him to concur in that which any less illustrious man would have instantly rejected as a palpable falsehood.

"The Turks are a very singular people——very singular!"

continued Mr. Crashem, energetically; "and a deuced difficult thing it is to get a bit of stiff done amongst them, too. But talking of discounting," added Mr. Adolphus Crashem, "puts me in mind of an extraordinary manner in which I did a bill about six months ago. Only conceive, Mr. Pickwick, my dear Sir—for a good bill I got but fifty pounds in ready money—the bill was for 200*l.*—fifty pounds' worth of squibs and a hundred pounds in patent sky-rockets."

"Patent sky-rockets!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, starting in his chair.

"Patent sky-rockets!" ejaculated Mr. Winkle.

"Yes—patent sky-rockets and squibs," reiterated Mr. Adolphus Crashem; "which I immediately exchanged for the small, but more convenient commodity, of 35*l.* sterling."

"At such an enormous loss!" cried Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! that is nothing, my dear Sir," returned the young gentleman, with a knowing wink at Mr. Winkle. "On another occasion I got a very respectable discounter—in the city, too—to do me a bill of 1000*l.*—one thousand, mind, or I'm no gentleman—and what do you think he gave me?"

"Really I cannot say," returned Mr. Pickwick; "perhaps nine hundred and ninety pounds."

"Nine hundred and ninety fiddlesticks!" cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem, contemptuously. "I just received two hundred pounds in ready money—three hundred in Chinese turnpike bonds—four hundred in Persian scrip—and another hundred in Newcastle coals."

Mr. Pickwick looked at Mr. Winkle—and Mr. Winkle looked at Mr. Pickwick—and then they both looked at Mr. Adolphus Crashem in silent astonishment, satisfied in their own minds that they were in the presence of a very extraordinary young man, who had seen a great deal of the world, and had turned his knowledge of that world to a very singular account.

"Ah! ah! you may look at and smile with each other, gentlemen," cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem, after a pause; "but I've seen a little of life, I flatter myself. Brought up at one of the universities—sent early into the army—appointed page of honour to his late majesty at the age of sixteen and nine months—very familiar with all the young ladies about Court, you know—why, the devil's in it if I *have* not had my share of experience;—" and in the heat of the moment Mr. Crashem flourished his right arm with such amazing rapidity, that Mr. Winkle prepared to rush towards the door, in case any additional symptoms of violent intentions should be manifested by the emphatic stranger.

"You entered early into life, then," said Mr. Pickwick, always desirous of sustaining a conversation.

"Did I not?" exclaimed Mr. Crashem, answering a question by the facile and simple means of putting another: "*I* should rather think so, confound it! If you had only seen me with my flea-bitten nag in the Park—"

"Eh!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes—Sir," continued Mr. Crashem; "my flea-bitten little piece of horse-flesh—"

"How the poor beast must have suffered!" cried Mr. Winkle, who still retained a lurking affection for an occasional display of his knowledge on all sporting-matters.

"A disease common among horses, I presume, Sir?" remarked Mr. Pickwick, with the utmost suavity and innocence.

Mr. Crashem pronounced somewhat emphatically the name of "Walker!" and then as strenuously adjured the presence of that portion of a certain edible called "Gammon;" after which he appeared rather disconcerted for a few minutes, and then varied the amusement he gratuitously and liberally afforded Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle, by whistling with peculiar taste and elegance some half-dozen notes of that highly popular song, "Bartlemy Fair." But, with the versatility incidental to all great minds, Mr. Crashem speedily became wearied of testing his musical powers: he accordingly ceased his melodious whistling with admirable abruptness, and turning shortly round upon Mr. Winkle, who almost put up his arm to avoid a blow, observed "What a rum thing life actually was!"

Mr. Winkle gladly murmured an affirmative, when he saw that no violence was intended.

"And yet," moralized the too sensitive Mr. Adolphus Crashem, "one must pay tolerably dear for initiation into its mysteries! You won't believe it, perhaps—but it's as true as you're sitting there,—that I didn't know any thing of the world—in fact, I was as green as grass, and was frequently done so exceedingly brown, that I now only wonder at my own folly—until I had actually run through upwards of two hundred thousand pounds!"

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, "that is four times as much as I made during thirty years, while I was in business."

"And a very pretty little fortune it would be, vested in the funds," observed Mr. Winkle.

Mr. Adolphus Crashem would probably have amused Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle with other and more interesting stories still, had not the door of the coffee-room suddenly opened, and Mr. Tupman appeared before his friends, who made many anxious inquiries concerning his health. A smile of triumph curled Mr. Tupman's lips, but a long and palpable scratch was depicted upon his countenance; and when he requested to be informed if dinner were nearly ready, he forgot the agonies he had endured at his morning's repast.

When Mr. Winkle had duly satisfied Mr. Tupman's curiosity relative to the proximity of the dinner-hour, the latter gentleman was introduced in due form to Mr. Adolphus Crashem; and a great many new compliments were invented and exchanged upon the occasion. Precisely at six o'clock a large tray, behind which walked a waiter, entered the coffee-room, and Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle and Mr. Adolphus Crashem, sate down to a most succulent dinner, Mr. Adolphus Crashem having voted Mr. Pickwick into the chair, and advised him, at the same time, to use his own discretion, and follow the dictates of his own taste in issuing his orders for wine, &c., as the amount of the bill might easily be divided amongst them on the following morning. To this delicate and polite arrangement, Mr. Pickwick, with the humility which formed so remarkable a trait in the

character of that truly great man, for some time objected; but Mr. Adolphus Crashem persisted in his determination that Mr. Pickwick should preside, and as president should order what he chose; so the matter was not argued any farther—and Mr. Crashem's proposition was unanimously agreed to.

"Wonderful fellow that Mr. Pickwick!" said Mr. Adophus Crashem to Mr. Winkle, in a whisper evidently intended to be heard by the great man himself. "How admirably he serves the soup!—a regular trump, eh?"

"Excellent!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, totally ignorant whether his new acquaintance alluded to Mr. Pickwick or the soup.

"Tell him to order Bordeaux-Laffitte, my dear fellow," added Mr. Crashem, in a low whisper this time, that was *not* intended to be heard. "'Tis the best wine in this hotel. I have not drank less than four bottles every day since I have been here; and, by the bye, there is a French count living in the hotel, who not only drinks it instead of water, but actually bathes in it every morning. Excellent bath—hot claret with spices!"

"So I should suppose," observed Mr. Winkle, who did not choose to appear ignorant of such matters, which Mr. Crashem seemed to regard as quite common-place.

"The devil you would!" thought Mr. Crashem; and while this gentleman was occupied in that and similar satisfactory reflections, Mr. Winkle whispered to Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Tupman whispered to Mr. Pickwick, and Mr. Pickwick hinted something to the waiter; and the upshot of the whispering and the hinting was the disappearance of the waiter for a few minutes, and then his return with several bottles of the wine so especially recommended by Mr. Adolphus Crashem.

"Fine girl, that chambermaid!" said Mr. Tracy Tupman, when he had imbibed a couple of glasses of the Laffitte with peculiar relish.

"Excellent wine!" observed Mr. Pickwick; and in the absence of a moment, during which he vainly endeavoured to recollect its name, he poured out and drank three glasses of the inviting beverage.

"Why, this is just like claret!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle; "I thought I couldn't be deceived!"

"Devilish good stuff it is too," remarked Mr. Crashem, who scorned the circumscribed scope of a wine-glass, and drank the Laffitte in a tumbler. "Now then, waiter—clear away the soup—and, with all due deference to the president, let us have a glass of the best champagne."

The waiter, through some idiosyncracy or another, did not appear to have that faith in Mr. Adolphus Crashem which could remove mountains; he accordingly cast a glance of respectful appeal to Mr. Pickwick, and perceiving assent in the expressive countenance of that gentleman, he resolved upon executing the order forthwith.

"Waiter!" cried Mr. Crashem, in an authoritative tone of voice, as that functionary was about to leave the room.

"Well, Sir," said the waiter, somewhat discontentedly.

"Let it be Moett's—Moett's best, do you hear, waiter?" added Mr. Adolphus Crashem, contracting his brows, and striking the table

violently, as if he were determined to be obeyed; "none of your confounded gooseberry mixture, mind."

"You appear to be acquainted with the ways of the French, Sir," suggested Mr. Pickwick, mildly, when the waiter had left the room.

"Oh! hang them, they can't take me in," returned Mr. Crashem, fiercely. "The first day I arrived they brought me a bottle of ink and water—the second, vinegar with a blue-bag steeped in it—the third, cider and log-wood—and all this they were pleased to call claret. But I deuced soon discovered their tricks, and shan't suffer you to be taken in as I was, damn me if I do."

"I am sure we are very much obliged to you, Sir," observed Mr. Pickwick; "and I am only sorry that we cannot have the pleasure of travelling to Paris together."

"And why not?" enquired Mr. Crashem, throwing himself back in his chair, and beckoning Mr. Tupman to take wine with him; "and why not?" he added, with a nod to Mr. Winkle, which that gentleman did not know whether to acknowledge through the medium of a smile, or a similar telegraphic despatch.

"I thought—that is, I merely fancied," said Mr. Pickwick, "that your bankers—"

"Oh! they be hanged!" cried Mr. Crashem, with admirable emphasis. "You start to-morrow morning, you say?"

Mr. Pickwick replied in the affirmative.

"Well, then—send and take your places to-night, and I will secure mine. Or stay—we might fall upon different coaches; so how shall we remedy it? Oh! I see," cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem, after a momentary pause—"you may as well take all the places, and we can settle afterwards."

"With much pleasure," said Mr. Pickwick; and this matter having been arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, they betook themselves to discuss the second course of edibles, and the reinforcement of potables, which the intelligent waiter spread upon the table in handsome array; and what with the wine, and the *entrées de poison*, and the *hors d'œuvres*, and the *fricandeau*, and the *volaille*, and the *douceurs*, they managed to make a very tolerable dinner; Mr Adolphus Crashem assuring Mr. Winkle that Mr. Pickwick was an excellent carver; Mr. Tupman pondering on the charms of the chambermaid; Mr. Winkle thinking of Arabella; and Mr. Pickwick himself essaying sundry glasses of champagne, for the purpose of ascertaining the discrepancy that existed between it and gooseberry-wine.

In the midst of the conviviality and mirth which reigned in the coffee-room—where the Pickwickians and Mr. Adolphus Crashem were left undisturbed by any other visitor, as they chanced to be the only travellers who were that day staying at the hotel—the waiter entered the room, and whispered a few words in Mr. Pickwick's ear. That immortal gentleman, not exactly comprehending the information of which the waiter had made it his express business to put him into immediate possession, returned so singular an answer, it would appear, that the *garcon* merely shrugged his shoulders and did not attempt to continue the conversation. He accordingly left the jovial party to themselves, and repaired to the kitchen, where he narrated an ad-

venture, the particulars of which we shall lay before the reader in the space of a few minutes.

"I say, Pickwick," hiccupped Mr. Winkle, "what did that fellow want with you—eh?"

"Just to know if we desired any music," returned that benevolent gentleman, his countenance beaming with smiles of philanthropy and kindness: "the violin, I think he said—that is, I am not sure, mind—I merely think so."

"Exactly!" cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem. "Never be too positive—nothing I hate more than lies—nothing!"—and having delivered himself of this very just though somewhat extraordinary sentiment, inasmuch as he was expressing his dislike of the very friends through whose agency he lived, Mr. Crashem swallowed a large tumbler-full of Claret to the health of Mr. Pickwick; and that gentleman, determined not to be out-done in politics, swallowed another to return the compliment; and then Mr. Crashem did the same with Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle; and Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle looked the very pictures of sobriety and temperance.

A little brandy-and-water and a few cigars were then introduced, and Mr. Crashem proved himself to be one of the most entertaining young men his audience had ever had the good fortune to encounter. He was moreover, according to his own account—and no person of taste ever doubts the word of a gentleman in these times of superior refinement, although the honour of the most respectable tradesmen be daily called in question—one of the most upright, straight-forward individuals in existence: he abhorred an untruth, as he before observed—he never suffered a bill to remain unpaid—and, in his dealings with his equals, probity and rectitude were his characteristics.

The party did not break up till a late hour; but Mr. Pickwick had shortly after dinner, and before the wine had produced any very visible effect upon his own countenance or the faces of his companions, taken the precaution of ordering the waiter to secure their places by the diligence for the following morning at nine o'clock, and to call them at half-past seven—a measure which not a little excited the admiration of the young man of the world who had so kindly volunteered his services to the heroes of these memoirs, and who had so liberally expressed his determination of seeing that they were not imposed upon.

In the mean time, while his illustrious masters were employed in digesting their dinners and the extraordinary anecdotes related by Adolphus Crashem, Esq., Mr. Samuel Weller had taken especial care of himself in the gastronomic way, and had hinted to the waiter, with whom he had previously conversed, the propriety of seeing the "lions" of Calais, as his masters intended to start for Paris early on the following morning.

"Ain't there no kinds of amusements in this 'ere town in vich von might indulge vithout bodily or mental harm to his-self?" enquired Mr. Weller, as he tossed off a glass of bottled porter.

"There's the theatre—and the café—and—in fact, every kind o' pastime," was the reply.

"Hooray for the theayter, then!" cried Sam; "and as the hemperor

von't vant my services again this evening, I don't care if I indulges in a little innocent diwersion, as the boy said ven he run the cock-charfer through vith a brass pin."

"I shall be most happy to accompany you," said the obliging waiter; and in a moment he had divested himself of his apron and jacket, and endorsed a handsome black coat which an English nobleman had given him a few days before.

"Adoo for the present, ladies," said Mr. Weller, making a low bow to the female portion of the domestic community of Meurice's hotel, "and keep up yer sperets for my sake during my absence. Come along, old stick-in-the-mud, and look alive, or ve shan't get good places, as the father said to his son ven they vos a-going to see the chap hanged for the murder of his five babbies."

To the theatre Mr. Weller and the waiter accordingly repaired, and obtained two front seats in the gallery, whence their eyes commanded a view of the whole house. The first piece had already commenced; and as it was a Comic Opera, the orchestra was playing, and the actors and the actresses were singing with all their might.

"Nothink wery partickler, this 'ouse ain't," said Mr. Weller, in a tone of voice something louder than a whisper, to his companion.

"Very good for a provincial town," returned the waiter.

"Don't them chaps mean to talk at all, old feller?" enquired Sam, alluding to the actors—"or is it all caterwauling and screeching?"

"It is nearly all singing," answered the waiter, in a tone that bore strong evidence to the wound his feelings had received by Mr. Weller's remarks.

"Vy, von might sing a song von's self, vith all this 'ere clatter," observed Mr. Weller, after a moment's pause; and, suiting the deed to the word, he commenced the following remarkably simple and affecting air for the express behoof of his companion:—

"There vos a young 'ooman vich kep' a tripe shop,
In a alley o' great Lunnun town;
She'd fry ye a sassage, or grill ye a chop,
And sell, unbeknown to the gagers, a drop
O' blue-ruin to vash the grub down.

She never bought dogs as vos drown'd in the river,
And the cat's-meat she couldn't a-bear;
But she had the best pork as the eye could diskiver,
And her shop was the cleanest——"

At this part of the above truly beautiful effusion the music suddenly left off, the singing of the actors ceased simultaneously, and a part of Mr. Weller's melody distinctly met the ear of every one present.

"*A la porte, le tapageur!*" cried several voices; and a few individuals in Sam's immediate vicinity commenced a series of hissing, hooting, and ejaculation, which for a moment disturbed the usually imperturbable disposition of the cause of the confusion. In the midst of the disturbance two grim-looking figures, whose heads were surmounted each by a large cock-hat, made their appearance at the entrance of the gallery, and enquired in a terrible voice which was the

rebellious personage whose untimely melody had created the noise that prevailed in the house. A dozen accusing tongues, and as many extended fingers, indicated Mr. Samuel Weller to be the culprit, and in a moment the two *sergents-de-ville* precipitated themselves upon him, and made every preparation to eject him from the theatre.

"Brayvo! here's a rig!" cried Sam; and by a desperate effort he freed himself from the grasp of the policemen, knocked the cocked hat of one without any ceremony into the pit, and banged the other over the eyes of its proprietor.

"Go it, my covey!" cried an Englishman from the boxes.

"Arrah! by Jasus, my dear fellow—and why don't ye pitch into 'em, by my sowl now?" ejaculated a vulgar representative of the sons of the Emerald Isle, who was stationed in the pit.

"You had much better come and help me, gen'lemen," ejaculated Mr. Weller, very coolly; "and *then* ve might do vonders by co-alition, as the wery nice ministers vich vos in observed to the wery foolish ministers vich vos out."

"*Sacré Anglais!*" muttered a Frenchman who stood near Sam, and who immediately stepped forward to aid the functionaries of the law, while those individuals, having recovered from the momentary surprise into which Mr. Weller's pugilistic behaviour had thrown them, prepared once more to secure the offender—an object which, despite of the manly resistance they experienced, was speedily accomplished by dint of superior strength. Sam looked around in vain for his friend the waiter—that gentleman had deemed it prudent to retire at the commencement of the uproar.

"This is all wery vell, gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller, having now recovered his usual equanimity and coolness.; "but you're a d—d unconstitushonal force, you air—and I'm a free-born Englishman, vich von't submit to none o' your Johnny Darmies."

The town-serjeants did not pay the slightest attention to—even if they understood—this manly assertion of political right and privilege; but bore Mr. Weller away from the theatre, and conducted him through the streets to the main guard-house, on the Grande-Place, a crowd of French and English following in the rear, and rending the air with their shouts and exclamations. The commissary of police was immediately sent for; but a quarter of an hour elapsed ere his arrival, as he was engaged in a game of dominoes at a neighbouring café, and could not attend to business till he had done it.

When the great functionary did, however, make his appearance at the guard-house, he examined into the matter with the greatest impartiality and justice, allowing Mr. Weller the benefit of an interpreter, and listening to his tale, through the medium of the said interpreter, with extraordinary patience. The case being thoroughly understood, the commissary, who was not overawed, as Mr. Weller fondly fancied he would have been, at the magic name of Pickwick, declined pronouncing judgment till the following morning; and in the mean time Mr. Weller was consigned to the quiet seclusion of a little cell of about four feet square, in the Light-house, called the *Violon*.

CHAPTER IV.

A VARIETY OF ADVENTURES THROUGH WHICH MR. WELLER PASSES; AND THE HIGHLY SATISFACTORY, AS WELL AS TRULY NOVEL AND ORIGINAL MANNER, IN WHICH HE ACCOUNTS FOR THEM.

Mr. Weller had not long sojourned in the *Violon*, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and two gigantic forms entered the cell. The first was dressed like a harlequin, in chequered raiment; the second was attired in a gendarme's costume. Both wore tremendous whiskers, and equally fierce moustachios, and their under-lips were graced with a tuft of hair, called by the French an *imperial*.

"How do you do, young man?" enquired the harlequin sternly.

"Aye—how *do* you do?" echoed the gendarme.

"Not amiss, thank'ee, all things con-sidering," replied Mr. Weller. "Pray, how air you?"

"Come, now—none of your gammon," cried the harlequin in very good English; "but make haste and follow us."

"Where to?" demanded Mr. Weller.

"You'll know that safe enough presently," answered the gendarme, "Come, make haste—or I'll be hanged if I don't awaken the executioner and have you guillotined."

"And if my friend don't do *that*," quietly observed the harlequin, "I'll turn you into a cat or a rabbit, and no mistake."

"Wery much obleeged for sich kindness on your parts, gen'lmen," returned Mr. Weller, "but 'ould rayther not accept o' yer bounties, as the poor man observed ven they asked him to go to the vork-us."

"Follow us, then," said the gendarme, "and make no noise as you pass through the guard-house, for fear of awaking the corporal. He has only drank nine bottles of beer to-day, and is infernally cross. So, follow us—and no noise."

Mr. Weller accordingly followed the harlequin and the gendarme down the narrow stair-case, traversed the guard-room, without being noticed by the soldiers, who were occupied in sharpening their short swords and grinding their bayonets, which latter seemed at least four feet in length, and arrived on the Grande Place, where the cold air imparted a shivering sensation to their limbs. Sam trod carelessly on, after his conductors, who led him to the quay, where a small boat, rowed by four stout men, awaited their arrival. Into this boat did Mr. Weller follow his singular guides; and the four sailors immediately betook themselves to their oars. So manfully did they pull away, that in a quarter of an hour the bark was afar from land, and the lights of Calais were no longer visible.

The gendarme then addressed Mr. Weller in the following terms:—

"You may now take your choice of two punishments that await your temerity. Not satisfied with having disturbed a whole theatre, which is one of the greatest crimes you can commit—you murder a commissary of police, put to flight an entire legion of gendarmes, and then knock down the lanthorn of the light-house itself. A very few miles from the spot where we are at present, is a barren rock where ships are occasionally wrecked. The merchandise of those ships is frequently washed on shore. And at a similar distance is the North-

Foreland light—a flat-bottomed ship, well moored at the extremity of the Goodwin Sands. To one of those destinations must you now be consigned. Choose, therefore, between the rock and the ship."

"Well, this *is* a go!" thought Mr. Weller; and his faithful historian does not scruple to acknowledge that the valet of the illustrious Pickwick was somewhat dismayed at the prospect of vegetating on a barren rock till the wreck of a ship should afford him salt pork and biscuit, or of passing the remainder of his existence in a miserable tenement of frail boards afloat on the surface of a lawless ocean.

"Decide!" exclaimed the gendarme, drawing a mighty sword from his belt, while the harlequin quietly reminded Mr. Weller that he should be turned into a cat or a rabbit if he did not obey the command last uttered.

"Pray, is there any grub aboard o' that 'ere ship?" enquired Sam, now more terrified than ever.

"Yes," replied the gendarme; "there are provisions enough for six months in that vessel."

"Somethink must turn up in the meantime," thought Mr. Weller within himself; "and although I don't ex-actly vant to be made a sort o' sea Robinson Crusoe, nevertheless I must yield to necessity, as the eel thought as the man vos about to skin him.

"Well, have you decided?" asked the harlequin; "or will you become a cat?"

"Not by no means," returned Mr. Weller; and after a little hesitation, he pronounced in favour of the ship.

To the ship the seamen accordingly rowed the boat, and in the almost incredible time of five minutes they were along-side the North-Foreland light. It was a red-brick-coloured vessel, with one mast, and had a most gloomy-looking appearance.

"Mount!" cried the gendarme, pointing to a rope that hung from the gangway, and beckoning to Mr. Weller at the same time. "Mount, I say—young man."

"Or—" began the harlequin; but Sam did not give him time to finish his sentence, for in a moment he stood upon the deck of the solitary vessel. He glanced around him, to take a survey of his new quarters, and then looked over the side to address a few words to the individuals who had so mysteriously and unlawfully conducted him thither: but the boat had disappeared, and the dark green waters were all that met his eye.

He went down into the cabin, and was about to give himself up to the most profound melancholy, when a sudden rustling of garments attracted his attention. He turned round, and a little white-headed old man met his view.

"You have forgotten to hang up the lamp, young chap," said the venerable stranger, taking a copious pinch of snuff out of a large barrel that stood in one corner of the cabin.

"You're a good customer to the bakkinists', you air," thought Mr. Weller. Then in a loud voice, he said, "And, pray, my ancient, vere am I to hang that i-dentical lamp?"

"To the mast-head, to be sure, young man," replied the old one: "and when you have so done, return to this cabin, and I will tell you the dreadful effects of neglect on board of a vessel like this."

Somehow or another, on this night, Mr. Weller was the most docile creature breathing. He did not utter a single complaint nor murmur against the harsh and rigorous treatment he was receiving; a strange necessity seemed to urge him on to fulfil without reluctance those duties which his present destiny was apparently bent upon imposing on him. Such was his stoical courage in misfortune, on the present occasion, that he actually swung the lamp to the mast-head without a regret at his hard fate; and having once more cast a momentary glance at the dark waves which surrounded the vessel, he returned to the stern-cabin, where he had left the old man.

A tolerably good supper was spread upon the table, and the old gentleman was making most frightful havoc with the viands before him. He despatched two pounds of boiled pork in the twinkling of an eye, ate a similar weight of pease-pudding, and drank off a bottle of porter at a draught. He then helped himself to bread and cheese in proportion, and ever and anon regaled his nose with a pinch of snuff from the barrel near him.

Animated with a very praiseworthy spirit of emulation, Mr. Weller commenced an equally vigorous attack upon the comestibles that were ranged upon the table; and so soon as the old man had entirely satisfied the cravings of his appetite, a task not so easily accomplished as some people might imagine, he addressed Mr. Weller as follows:—

"My dear Samuel—for such I know to be your name—listen to the sad history of the most unfortunate man that ever existed."

"I vill, vith wery great pleasure," returned Mr. Weller, smiling as he called to mind the supper eaten by the most unfortunate man that ever lived: "but, p'raps, you'd a-better take another cut o' the bilea pork, or von more pull at that ere svipe-pot, afore you commences your narrative. Pray, consider, my dear Sir, that you ain't made a over excellent repast."

"Nor more I have," answered the old man very seriously: "but it is my misery that takes away my appetite."

"It must be wery great, sure-ly," observed Mr. Weller, bolting a cubic inch of boiled pork; "wery great, indeed."

"So it is," returned the old man; "but if you will only let me speak, you shall judge for yourself. You must know that my name is Dibble, and that I am well connected with the first families in Kent. When the fleet was in the Downs, in 1815, I was hanged for mutiny, at the yard-arm of the ship in which I served."

"But you vos brought *to*, agin, though," interrupted Mr. Weller nodding facetiously at his companion.

"Indeed I was not, though," said that gentleman; "I died as quietly and calmly as ever a well-bred man did, who was obliged to make his *exit* from this world in a similar manner."

"And you mean to pretend for to insinivate that you ain t alive, do ye, old feller?" observed Mr. Weller with increased jocularity.

"He who says I am alive, tells a lie, Sir," cried the little man, his pale face glowing with rage and indignation.

"Vell, vell," said Sam, very quietly burying his head in a jug of porter, "ve von't have no vords about that 'ere, perwided ve understands each other—that 's all. So, peg away, old feller; although it *is* rayther suspicious, as the young lady said ven she found her cat's tail in the weal-pie."

"What I tell you, young man," continued the relative of the first families in Kent, "is as true as you are sitting there. I was duly hanged for mutiny in 1815, and my ghost, being the ghost of a sailor —for I was an assistant-surgeon on board the Bellerophon—was obliged to haunt some place at sea. I accordingly fixed myself in this little vessel, and a very snug berth I had of it for some time. I used to grub at the expense of the man who was left in charge of the ship, and he none the wiser; for I never showed myself in the day-time; and at night he saw I was a ghost, and treated me with the respect due to my profession."

"An' wery much to his credit, it where," interrupted Mr. Weller. "But pray, tell me—is the pro-fession o' ghoastesses a good 'un?"

"It used to be, Mr. Weller," returned the little old man. "There was a time when a ghost might do as he liked in a house—eat up the larder—drink the wine—and steal the loose money and stray linen. But now times are altered. 'Tis two to one if the butler don't empty the pantry himself before he goes to bed—and then when he *does* retire to repose, he fails not to kiss the chamber-maid, whose peculations of all there is to steal are winked at by the great functionary in consequence. Thus you see, it is scarcely possible now-a-days for a ghost to get a living."

"Wery true," exclaimed Mr. Weller; "and that may account for the milk in the cocoa-nuts."

"I don't know any thing about cocoa-nuts," responded the ghost: "but, this I *do* know, that I was very well off here for some time, and used to frighten away at least one man every month. At last a fellow came, named Downey, and he wasn't to be terrified at any price. He ate and drank like a cormorant, and never left any thing cold for my supper. It was no use my appearing to him, either by day or by night; for he was always so preciously drunk, he fancied he saw double and was in the habit of seeing the reflection of his own person when he really perceived me. This state of things never could last—I grew thin and meagre, and was pining rapidly away. At length Downey died one night of apoplexy, and I immediately threw him overboard, for ghosts do not like the smell of dead carcasses more than you who are alive do. Now there were provisions on board for at least three months—and I had all the ship to myself. Oh! Samuel, how I laughed and sang, and ate and drank; and for fear that the vessel might be visited by the authorities under whose controul it was, I hoisted the lamp regularly for about a fortnight. One night I had drank too much rum—and the devil a lamp was there at the mast-head at all. And here I sate—just where I am now—smoking my pipe and drinking my grog, when suddenly—bang! comes a thundering knock against the vessel, and a tremendous crash aroused me from my orgies. I hastened on deck, and found that the ship was run foul by a great East-Indiaman. Here's the devil to pay, said I to myself; and I immediately recollected that I had not hoisted the lamp. What was to be done? I cut the ropes, and let go the chains that held the vessel to her moorings, and away we went with the tide down the channel at fourteen knots an hour. I may as well observe, by way of parenthesis, that the East-Indiaman got on the sands, and every soul perished."

"And, pray, my fine feller," interrupted Sam, "what become of you?"

"We ran on shore between Deal and Dover, and as I took very good care to keep myself invisible, it was supposed that Downey must have been washed off the deck when the ship broke away from her moorings. But that is not all. After a few repairs, the vessel was towed back again to its old anchorage, and from that day till yesterday there have always been two men on board, so that one should be able to perform the necessary duties in case the other died. Thus, by my folly, did I work myself into a nice dilemma; for two men together are braver than one alone—and they did not care a fig for all the ghosts in the world. They moreover took precious good care to lock up their provender; and when I saw how badly I was likely to fare, I removed my quarters for a time to Eddistone Light-house."

"An' a wery good change it must ha' been," observed Mr. Weller, while the old man nodded approvingly. "But how come you here in your ancient nest agin, as the sparrow said to the svallow under the tilings?"

"Yesterday morning I took it into my head to pay a visit to my old habitation," answered the ghost, "which I had not seen for so many—many years; and on my arrival about dinner-time, I found the vessel empty!"

"Empty!" exclaimed Mr. Weller in astonishment.

"Yes—empty!" returned the old man. "God only knows what has become of the two sailors who had charge of her—but I shrewdly suspect they must have deserted, as I looked in vain for the jolly-boat."

"Wery like," said Sam, "and now you're all right vonce more in your old quarters, my svell cove, ain't you?"

"Exactly," responded Mr. Dibble, with a sly laugh; "and as I am also fond of a little company, I sent for you. My very particular friends, the ghosts of a harlequin and a gendarme—the former of whom killed himself by falling from a tight-rope, and the latter had his throat cut from ear to ear a short time ago—volunteered their services to bring you hither—and here you are!"—and the old man laughed triumphantly.

"You ghoastesses ain't wery partickler in your modes o' behaviour, von 'ould think," remarked Mr. Weller, debating in his own mind whether he should pitch into Mr. Dibble's shade or not.

"Being an ill-used race," said the ghost, when his mirth was somewhat subsided, "we prey occasionally upon mankind ourselves. There was a time when a ghost was the great personage quoted on every occasion; his name was a bugbear in the nursery, and a matter of speculation in the parlour. Whole books were written to prove his existence—and religion lent her aid to consecrate the truth. But now—our power is almost gone: grown-up people deny our supremacy, and children shake off the yoke which fear of us imposes, at a tender age. A woman-servant is only laughed at, if she say she has seen a ghost; and the housekeeper is sent to the Penitentiary if she pretend that certain articles have been abstracted through our especial agency. Thus, you see, Mr. Weller, our power is rapidly declining; and between ourselves—" here the old man drew his chair closer to Sam, and lowered his voice to a whisper—"and between ourselves,

there *are*—mind, I don't mean to say there are many—but there are some who affect not to believe in our existence at all!"

"How wery perwokin', ain't it?" said Mr. Weller, in deep sympathy with the unhappy ghost. "But vy doesn't you and your friends, their honours the ghoastesses, make yourselves less scarce, and more wisible to the public?"

"All that's of no use," exclaimed the old man; "for if we *do* appear to some one in the dead of night, it is immediately set down to a disordered imagination or a bad digestion. I myself appeared four times last year to the Lord Mayor; and the papers attributed it merely to an excess which the civic monarch had committed in eating too much of the green fat of turtle. So you see, it is of no use!" added Mr. Dibble with a profound sigh.

"Wery bad state o' things, this," observed Mr. Weller, while the ghost dipped his hand into the snuff-barrel; "wery!"

"So it is, my dear Samuel," echoed the ghost.—"But it is getting late now—and the night-air does not agree with me very well—and I must get up early to wash out my shirt—so good night, my dear fellow, and thank you kindly for your agreeable company!"

With these words the ghost stretched himself upon the floor of the cabin, and soon snored aloud. Mr. Weller imitated his example, and laying himself flat on his back upon the hard planks, he also was soon wrapped in the arms of slumber. But what was his astonishment, when, awaking at an early hour on the following morning, he found himself stretched in the middle of the *Violon*, his back aching most violently, and bearing ample testimony to the discomfort of the couch on which he had reposed.

The very natural and probable conclusion to which Mr. Weller came, when he mentally reviewed the adventures of the night, was that he had dreamt a very singular and remarkable dream. At the same time he recollected a certain wild legion, touching and concerning the North-Foreland Light, which the captain of the steam-vessel had narrated to him the day before; he also recalled to his mind that, as he traversed the Grande Place in the train that attended his illustrious master, he had seen a conjuror, in a harlequin's attire, performing certain strange and wild antics to the great amusement of a small crowd of three grown-up people and two small boys; and as his head was subsequently full of gendarmes, and solitary ships, and a host of strange ideas, it was no longer astonishing if his fertile imagination should have worked the whole up into a connected and continuous series of adventures. He was nevertheless determined to keep the tale to himself—a resolution to which he faithfully adhered till he confided it to us in secret a short time back.

CHAPTER V.

MR. WELLER IS EXTRICATED FROM HIS DIFFICULTIES.—THE HANDSOME CONDUCT OF THE COMMISSARY OF POLICE.—MR. CRASHEM INSTRUCTS MR. WINKLE IN A CHEAP AND INNOCENT MORNING'S AMUSEMENT.

So early as six o'clock in the morning did the waiter arouse Mr. Pickwick from his slumbers, just at the critical moment when that gentleman was snoring and dreaming away in a manner at once physically and morally beautiful to a degree. Mr. Pickwick's nasal murmurs resembled the rich deep tones of a bassoon; and his visions carried him back to those eventful days when his club was in all its glory. With his mental eye—for his corporeal one was shut fast as a prison door—did this truly great man behold himself mounted on a chair and addressing the members whom smoke and brandy-and-water, in conjunction with his eloquence, had almost involved in a delicious and enviable state of insensibility. The illustrious orator himself felt somewhat unsteady; and as he was in the very cream of a statistical account relative to the consumption of raw spirits in the classic regions of Saint Giles, he appeared to totter—his body swayed to and fro—and with a great start he endeavoured to catch at something to save himself from falling—when the president exclaimed—"Six o'clock, Sir!" and Mr. Pickwick awoke, as above stated.

"Singular," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, sitting up in his bed, and rubbing his eyes as if he wished to extract fire from them by excessive friction: "very singular—but, it was only a dream!"—and Mr. Pickwick smiled complacently underneath his nightcap.

"Six o'clock, Sir!" cried the waiter. "Shall I bring up some hot water, or send the barber to shave you, Sir?"

"Six, is it?" cried Mr. Pickwick, somewhat discontentedly; "and I desired you to call me at half-past seven."

"Yes, Sir," returned the waiter, "but—"

"But what?" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, taking his spectacles from under his pillow, and putting them on to scan the waiter from top to toe, by way of discovering his meaning.

"You are wanted, Sir," said that functionary with extreme reluctance.

"Wanted! where—at breakfast?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, his countenance brightening up, and relapsing into smiles. "Very good, waiter. Let's have some broiled ham and eggs."

"Breakfast is not quite ready yet, Sir," returned the waiter; "and it is out o' doors that you're wanted, Sir."

"The coach is not ready, then?" cried Mr. Pickwick in considerable alarm.

"No, Sir: but the Commissary of Police is; and he has sent a gendarme, with his kind compliments, to say that he would be glad if you'd step up to his office at the Town-hall for a few minutes."

"A gendarme!" cried Mr. Pickwick. "Has any thing happened, then, waiter, this morning?"

"No, not this morning, Sir; but last night," responded the waiter. "In fact, Sir, your servant is in the *Violon*."

"In the what?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, taking off his spectacles, wiping them, and putting them on again—an action which his historian fancies to have manifested an unusual degree of impatience on the part of that most perfect of Job's votaries.

"In a sort of prison, Sir—for having knocked down two gendarmes, and disturbed the whole theatre last night."

"At what time did this happen, waiter?" enquired Mr. Pickwick angrily.

"About half-past nine o'clock, Sir," was the reply.

"And why was I not informed of it, then, when it took place?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick still more angrily. "We did not break up till eleven."

"I *did* mention it last evening, Sir," said the waiter: "but *Monsieur* had drank a little wine, and the wine was rather strong, and when I mentioned the word *Violon* in English, which means *Violin*, *Monsieur* merely said, 'No, I thank'ee, waiter—we don't want any music now;' so I thought it better to hold my tongue till this morning."

"Bring me up some hot water, waiter," said Mr. Pickwick, after a moment's consideration, during which a cloud passed over his brow like a vapour on the placid waters of a lake, as Mr. Snodgrass remarked with poetic beauty on another occasion. And having uttered these words, Mr. Pickwick rolled out of his couch, and fell heavily on the floor; for he had forgotten the bed was much higher than those in England, and he was impelled by that haste to assist his faithful servant in his dilemma which invariably characterized his good actions. By the aid of the waiter he was speedily raised upon his legs once more; and, strange to relate, no oath escaped the lips of that extraordinary man. A terrible grimace alone expressed the extent of the pain he had experienced from the fall.

A quarter of an hour was sufficient to complete Mr. Pickwick's toilet, and when his ablutions were performed, his garments donned, and his gaiters hastily buttoned, he descended to the coffee-room, rang the bell with unusual violence, and desired the waiter, who answered the summons, to conduct him to the office of the Commissary of Police. To the Town-hall he accordingly repaired, and was introduced into a small room with a very large window looking upon the Grande Place. There was a long desk covered with papers in the middle of the room, and behind it was seated a venerable-looking old man, with hair as white as snow, and a red riband in his buttonhole. He wore round his waist a wide scarf of three colours, blue, white, and red; but otherwise he was dressed in plain clothes of fashionable cut. On one side of the desk stood a couple of stern-looking functionaries of the police, the same whom Mr. Weller had insulted the previous evening; and on the other side was that gentleman himself, looking particularly dirty and seedy after having passed a night in the *Violon*.

"Mornin', Sir," said Sam, when Mr. Pickwick's glance encountered that of his delinquent domestic. "How air you, Sir, by this time? as the prize-fighter said to his an-tagonist ven he'd a-knocked von of his eyes and all his teeth out. How air you, Sir?"

"How are *you*, Samuel?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, who deemed it expedient to assume a harsh expression of countenance; an essay he accomplished with the same success that would be experienced by an under clerk in a Public Office endeavouring to appear like a gentleman. "But how came you here?"

"Them two wery insinivating chaps vith the pleasing faces brought me in spite o' myself, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, pointing to the grim-looking town-serjeants with the most perfect indifference.

"Were they obliged to use force, then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Can't wery vell make a man do a thing vot he don't like vithout some little compulsory means, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, touching his hat; "as the French sugger I heerd about said, ven he cut off his fore-finger, cos he vouldn't be drawn in the pro-scription."

"This is a very disagreeable adventure, do you know, Sam?" observed Mr. Pickwick, fidgetting with his eye-glass.

"So the nobleman said, Sir," rejoined Mr. Weller, "ven he tore his nankeen tights at the country-ball."

"And you appear to take it very coolly, too," continued Mr. Pickwick, with a faint smile at the imperturbable disposition of his domestic.

"No use repinin', Sir," answered Sam, doggedly; "'twon't mend matters, no more than cryin' repaired the milk-jug vich the young gal dropped on the step o' her mas'er's front-door. An' a many wery sensible annygoats I might in-duce, Sir, to prove the truth o' that 'ere maxim."

"Well, well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, somewhat impatiently, for he perceived that the Commissary of Police had arranged his papers in due order before him, and was about to investigate the merits of the case now under his especial cognizance: "you shall repeat them another time. At present more important business occupies our attention."

"Silent, Sir, as the knocker at Newgate," said Mr. Weller laconically.

"*Silence, Messieurs!*" exclaimed one of the town-serjeants fiercely, while the other twirled his moustachios and looked very much like a savage bear in the Garden of Plants in Paris.

"*Appellez l'interprete!*" cried the Commissary of Police; and in five minutes the interpreter made his appearance, having been called away from the agreeable occupation of writing an English love-letter for a French officer to an Irish lady's-maid.

Through the *medium* of the interpreter the case was fully investigated. Mr. Pickwick was put in possession of the facts, and the Commissary of Police listened patiently to a speech of twenty minutes' length, which Mr. Pickwick deemed it necessary to make on the occasion, during the recital of which Mr. Weller favoured the Commissary with sundry knowing winks, nods of the head, jerks of the hand, and other telegraphic signs eminently calculated to mystify the magistrate much more than Mr. Pickwick's oration could possibly have done.

"And now it's my turn," said Sam, stepping forward, when Mr. Pickwick's oration had been duly interpreted to the Commissary, on whom it appeared to have made a considerable impression, if one might judge by the manner in which he shook his head, shrugged up

his shoulders, and screwed his mouth into a pleasing variety of forms. "Now it's my turn, old Touch-and-go," exclaimed Mr. Weller, addressing himself to the intrepreter, and laying hold of that gentleman's button-hole, the size of which he considerably increased in a very few minutes. "Please to tell the big-vig as sits in judgment in this wery respectable little court, vich, for all the vorld, resembles a good-sized English closet, saving his Vorship's presence, and your'n, Sir," with a nod to his master, "that I've no objection to make that 'pology vich it becomes von gen'leman to make to another. I von't aggrawate the beak—his Vorship—I mean, by portruding any o' my remarks upon the cheer: I should only re-mind him o' wot the boy said to his mas'er, ven he vos a-going to be flogged,—that mercy's the more better part o' justice; and just beg on him to recollect the observation the nobleman made to the cook ven she threw the black-puddins into the grate as vos meant for his lordship's dinner, that he'd overlook it for vonce on con-dition o' good behav'our for the future."

Having delivered himself of this lengthy speech, which was secretly applauded by Mr. Pickwick, who muttered something about Cicero and Demosthenes, Mr. Weller nodded familiarly to the Commissary of Police, shoved his hands into his pockets, and awaited the result in silence. Mr. Pickwick's private notes do not inform us whether the interpreter faithfully translated and rendered Mr. Weller's oration or defence into the French language; and this we can account for in no other way than by the supposition that Mr. Pickwick was ignorant of the fact himself—an idea that is suggested by the circumstance of his not being acquainted with the language at that period. But this we do know, that the apology was accepted by the magistrate, on condition that it should be accompanied by a fine of five francs for the benefit of the poor, fifteen francs for the repairs that it was found necessary to make to the cocked-hats of the town-serjeants, and twenty francs to increase the revenues of his majesty Louis Philippe. The money was immediately paid by Mr. Pickwick, who spoke loudly of French leniency and the ability of French magistrates, as he walked back to the hotel with Mr. Samuel Weller.

"Wery 'ansome conduct it where, Sir," echoed Sam; "and a wery great relief to my mind arter a-passing eight or nine long hours in a hole to vich no light can't penetrate even by day. If a chap had the misfortune to be o-pressed vith a veak intellect, he'd go a-ravin' mad, Sir, or else be attacked vith the quivers, like old Gubbins in the King's Bench."

"Who was he, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick sharply.

"Vy, Sir, he's a cook on his own account," returned Mr. Weller; "and ven you and me, Sir, vos in the Fleet, I heerd his story from another pris'ner vich had been imported by have-his-carcase from the Bench to the Farrin'don hot-tel. This Gubbins, it appears, Sir, vos sent to Orsemonger Lane Jug—"

"What does Jug mean, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick sharply.

"Prison, Sir, to be sure," returned Mr. Weller.

"Oh! I see,—a synonyme," observed his master.

"No, Sir, it ain't a sin on 'em to be there, cos they can't help it, Sir. But that ain't neither 'ere nor there, as the member o' parli'ment observed in a promiscuous manner, ven he had improperly

alluded to the Speaker's vig. This Gubbins, Sir, as I vos a-saying, vent to Orsemonger Lane for some reason or another—I raly don' know vot—and they shoved him into a cell vhere two mallifectors had bin the night afore, and vos scragged the same mornin.' Vell, Sir, he didn't much care about it as long as 'twas day-light: but ven the night come, his fears commenced; and by twelve o'clock he trembled wiolently from head to foot. Just as St. George's had strick the hour o' midnight, a low woice echo'd through the cell, and said, 'How air you, Gubbins—my boy?' and then another cried out a little louder, 'Velcome, Gubby, to the murderer's cell!' The poor feller's 'air stood up on eend, and his heart palpitated like the penthulum of a eight-day clock: but wot vos his 'orror and ser-prise, ven a faint light stole into the room, and he see the ghostesses o' the two murderers as plain as I twig you now, Sir. Their eyes vos vide open and looked for all the vorld like lead; and their 'eads hung a little over to von side. They gave a wery formiliar nod to old Gubbins, groaned heavily, and wanished avay into nothink, leaving poor Gubbins afflicted vith such a shaking as he han't never since rekivered from, and never vill, Sir. At this present speaking he's a cook in the Bench, to vich he vos removed agin the same day."

Just as Mr. Weller had brought this most true and correct narrative to a termination, Mr. Pickwick's hand was purposely placed in contact with the handle of the door of the coffee-room at Meurice's hotel; and having dismissed his domestic for the moment, he was about to enter the room, when the sounds of voices fell loudly on his ear.

"Seven's the main—spin 'em, if you like—nine—nine to seven—I want nine—and nine it is!" cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem, while a strange rattling of something that resembled dice was very plainly heard by the astonished Mr. Pickwick, who, without any farther hesitation, flung open the door, and walked hastily into the coffee-room, where a singular spectacle met his eyes.

Mr. Winkle was seated at one corner of the table, looking the very picture of misery and discontent; while Mr. Adolphus Crashem was flourishing a dice-box in his right hand, and tenaciously holding a heap of bank-notes in his left. Mr. Crashem was not seated: he was leaning in a peculiarly interesting attitude over the table, and preparing to throw once more as Mr. Pickwick entered the apartment.

"Good morning, my dear Sir—good morning," cried Mr. Crashem, with the most unblushing effrontery, as the great man made his appearance. "Hard at work, you see—must get up early to do business—eh, Winkle?"—and Mr. Crashem was immediately convulsed with laughter.

"It *is* rather early, Winkle!" observed Mr. Pickwick with a frown; "and in a public hotel!"

"Oh in France, my dear fellow," interrupted Mr. Adolphus Crashem, "'tis all the go. Perhaps you'd like to have a throw yourself. Confound it, don't refuse, now: I'll set you a quid with pleasure. Shall we say a quid by way of a start?"

"No—no! I *must* have my revenge!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, casting a republican glance, that seemed the very assertion of conscious freedom, on his great leader, who sighed, drew near the fire, and

did not venture another observation. Mr. Winkle was determined to have his revenge; and Mr. Crashem, in the most generous and handsome manner, assured him that he wished he might get it.

"How queerly you take the dice up," observed Mr. Winkle to Mr. Crashem, who was preparing to "have another shy," as he beautifully expressed himself in the figurative language of the poets. "What makes you squeeze your fingers so close together?"

"That's the genteel way, that is," answered Mr. Crashem, glancing slyly at Mr. Pickwick, and recalling to his mind the word that denotes the colour of the leaves and the grass in the middle of Spring. "Seven—eight—eight to seven—eight it is—that makes another five!"—and Mr. Winkle immediately consigned to Mr. Crashem's keeping a five-pound Bank of England note, which that gentleman received with a certain twinkling of the eye that denoted any thing but infelicity.

"I must try and get up my play a little," cried Mr. Winkle with a very long face. "'Tis almost an age since I handled the dice-box."

"I never saw you do so before," observed Mr. Pickwick; "and I hope that—"

Posterity will for ever remain ignorant of the intended conclusion of Mr. Pickwick's speech; for at the very critical moment when he left off, the waiter entered with the breakfast things, and thus put an end to the play as well as to Mr. Adolphus Crashem's certainty of gain—for such a word as *chance* in the matter would be totally misplaced—to the intense delight of Mr. Pickwick, and the especial sorrow of Miss Grinwell's betrothed, who seemed particularly desirous of adding another fifty pounds to the ten five-pound notes he had already acquired. Mr. Tupman speedily made his appearance, and the adventures of Mr. Weller became the immediate topic of conversation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRAVELLERS COMMENCE THEIR FRENCH TOUR.—THE INTERIOR OF A DILIGENCE.—A TABLE D'HOTE, AT WHICH AN EXTRAORDINARY DEGREE OF PIETY IS MANIFESTED BY MR. PICKWICK.—THE GENDARME.

The astonishment of the waiter was not a little excited, when Mr. Adolphus Crashem addressed him as follows, so soon as breakfast had been carefully dispatched.

"Waiter—bring me my bill—do you hear, waiter?"

"Beg pardon, Sir," responded the *garçon*, when he had found time to soothe his feelings, calm his mind, and assure himself that his ears did not deceive him, and that he was not labouring under a delusion "beg pardon, Sir, but it has already been delivered about fourteen times."

"Of course—of course—weekly bills!" cried Mr. Crashem, casting an uneasy glance at Mr. Pickwick; "and while I think of it, I had better step into the office and settle this little account with the landlord himself."

"As you please, Sir," observed the waiter, slightly shrugging his shoulders: and he proceeded to rub the table with a violence that

could only have been adopted to drown the "*Sacr-r-r-ré nom de Dieu;*" by the utterance of which he relieved the agitation so unlooked for an occurrence had thrown him into.

At this crisis Mr. Weller, enveloped in his great-coat, entered the coffee-room.

"Well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, looking at his watch, and then at the clock in the picture over the mantel-piece; "what news, Sam?"

"The diligence starts in ten minutes, Sir," answered Mr. Weller. "I've bin to see all the luggage safely stow'd away, and as the wehicle don't go round the toun to take up passingers, 't would be rayther adwisable to stump down to the office vich is on'y in the next street."

"Give me my great-coat, then, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick; and in a moment the immortal gentleman was carefully wrapped up in the above-mentioned garment. Mr. Weller then proceeded to assist Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle to encase their own respective bodies in similar contrivances, which ceremony had scarcely been performed, and the bill duly paid, when Mr. Crashem returned to the coffee-room, mysteriously enveloped in a thick rough coat which he had just purchased at a ready-made clothes-shop on the Grande Place. Every thing being now ready, and every body prepared for departure, the five travellers followed the porter of the hotel to the diligence office in the Rue Neuve, where they found the five horses already harnessed to the vehicle, and the vehicle itself laden with luggage to the height of about four feet above the roof. The door of the *interieur*, or central department of the diligence, was immediately thrown open; and a clerk, armed with a large book and a steel pen, took up his station by the steps.

"*Monsieur* Peek-veek, number one!" cried the individual just mentioned; and with great dexterity aided Mr. Pickwick into the seat allotted to him.

"*Monsieur* Weenkell, number two!" continued the man with the book; "*Monsieur* Toopman, number three; *Monsieur* Crashem, number four!" and the gentlemen thus enumerated were also handed in due order into their places. A pause of a few minutes ensued, during which the clerk cast an anxious glance towards the entrance of the coach-yard, as if he were waiting the arrival of other passengers. At length his face brightened up, and two individuals presented themselves at the office-door.

"*Allons, Messieurs!*" cried the man with the book, "*en place!*" and he proceeded to read their names, and assign each to his respective seat. "*Monsieur* Dumont, number five; *Monsieur* Boozie, number six. An' you, young man, you go dere—you climb imperial—you no break neck, me hop!"

This latter injunction was delivered to Mr. Weller, who ascended to his seat according to the directions given him; and in an another moment the diligence was rolling along at the safe and easy pace of four miles an hour.

By the time the fortifications were passed, Mr. Pickwick had had an opportunity of inspecting the exterior of the two strangers who occupied the fifth and sixth places in the *interieur* of the diligence. M. Dumont was an individual about six-and-thirty. His face was neither hand-

some nor ugly; but his countenance was stern, and his dark piercing eyes appeared as if they could read the most secret thoughts of those whose glances they encountered. He wore large black whiskers and long moustachios, that gave an additional air of fierceness to his general aspect, which was military and warlike. He was dressed in plain clothes, if we except a red stripe down his trowsers—and Mr. Pickwick immediately concluded that he was an officer of inferior rank; for in his manners he was neither vulgar nor genteel, neither calculated to adorn a ball-room, nor to associate with private soldiers or servants. He was something between a gentleman and a serjeant or corporal—of that dubious rank, in appearance, which sees its equals no-where, and often enables the individual, who bears it, to be the companion of the well-born, as well as occasionally compelling him to mix with the lower classes.

Mr. Boozie was a short, fat Englishman, with a very apoplectic neck, a red face, and a laughing eye. He was clad in a cut-away green coat with brass buttons, drab trowsers, and top-boots. A white great-coat had also accompanied him into the diligence; but of this he preferred making a seat rather than a covering.

"No fear of being overturned at this pace, I think," said Mr. Adolphus Crashem, appealing to Mr. Winkle, whose countenance had managed to divest itself of the look of extreme misery it had lately worn.

"No, indeed," returned that gentleman with a smile of assent to the truth of his new friend's remark.

"And yet I *was* once upset on this road," observed Mr. Boozie in a gruff tone of voice quite unassumed; the melodious sounds of his articulation being as natural as the nose at which his two eyes occasionally glanced, their visual rays forming with mathematical precision a neat acute angle at about one inch from the tip of the said proboscis. "It was coming from Boulogne, I think—no, it wasn't, either—I tell a fib when I say that, 'twas going to Boulogne—in the winter time too—I mean the summer—yes, it *was* the summer, when I think of it—what a fib I was telling, to be sure!"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick: "and, pray, were you much hurt?"

"Merely broke my collar-bone, Sir," returned Mr. Boozie; then in a moment he added,—"No, it wasn't my collar-bone either—I'm again in error—'twas one of my right ribs."

"Oh! that's nothing," cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem, fortified with the laudable resolution of yielding to no man in the art and beauty of composition, and the extent of an inventive genius. "It was only a few weeks ago, that I and young Lord Wippemwell were overturned in his stanhope—close by Hyde Park Corner. A nurse and two children were passing at the time—the nurse received me in her arms safe and sound—plump wench she was, too; but the little girl, who was only seven years old, poor thing, was smothered by Lord Wippemwell. You might have read of it in the *Morning Herald*, under the head of 'Afflicting Occurrence—one life lost,' and in the *Post*, 'Aristocratic Overthrow.'"

"How very shocking!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, softened almost

to tears, while Mr. Tupman thought of the nursery-maid, and longed to ask if she were pretty. "But I do not think I noticed it in the papers you allude to."

"I saw it, though, in the *Times*, I did," exclaimed Mr. Boozie. A short pause ensued—Mr. Pickwick closed his eyes, perhaps in thought—Mr. Tupman sighed, as the countenance of the pretty chamber-maid was recalled to his memory by a voluntary effort—and Mr. Boozie appeared to reflect whether he had not contradicted himself, or uttered some untruth that required to be explained.

"Devilish slow work, this is," observed Mr. Crashem, by way of breaking a silence that was any thing but delightful.

"Very tedious," responded Mr. Winkle, who was seated opposite to Mr. Crashem. "What can we do to amuse ourselves?"

"Two good hours more to Boulogne," cried Mr. Crashem; "and the most amusing fellow of the whole kit is asleep," he added after a moment, pointing towards Mr. Pickwick, whose expressive countenance was wreathed in smiles, and whose nose sent forth the harmonious sounds that invariably accompanied the slumbers of that extraordinary man.

"So he is, I declare!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle; and he looked at Mr. Crashem, who fancied he saw something peculiar in Mr. Winkle's glance, and smiled significantly.

"Should you like to have your revenge, Winkle?" enquired Mr. Crashem after a moment's delay. "Or p'rhaps you wouldn't like to play so high—eh? Well, well, here goes—any thing to accommodate a friend, as Sir Patrick Pocock used to say to my father, the General."

"I knew Sir Patrick Pocock," exclaimed Mr. Boozie; "was he a friend of your's?"

"Nothing more than god-father, that's all," returned Mr. Adolphus Crashem, with a look of pity which he bestowed upon Mr. Boozie. "'Twas through his influence that I got into parliament the year before last," he added, after a moment, with the carelessness of a great man unaccustomed to speak of himself.

"Ah! what—are you in parliament?" enquired Mr. Winkle, his respect for Mr. Adolphus Crashem considerably increasing.

"Am I not?" said Mr. Crashem; "that's all!"—and having uttered this very satisfactory and comprehensive sentence, he quietly drew a pack of cards from one of the pockets of his mysterious rough coat.

"For what borough, might I inquire?" meekly demanded Mr. Winkle.

"What borough?" demanded Mr. Crashem, the extent of his political responsibilities for a moment obliterating from his memory the very name of the town inhabited by the constituents who elected him. "Oh! what borough?—why, Skinkville, Somersetshire, to be sure."

"Oh! I recollect!" ejaculated Mr. Boozie, suddenly awaking from a deep reverie: "I made a false statement just now—I don't know Sir Patrick Pocock, when I think of it."

Mr. Crashem, we are bound to observe, did not express any astonishment at this assertion, but proceeded to shuffle the cards, and enquired of Mr. Winkle what they should play for.

"Just a trifle," returned Mr. Winkle, "only for the amusement of the thing."

"Two bob and a bender—will that suit you?" enquired Mr. Crashem, in a playful strain of metaphor, or rather synonyme.

"Eh?" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, who did not wish to appear ignorant of terms evidently used by people in the higher walks of life: "how much did you say?"

"Half-a-crown, if you like," responded Mr. Crashem; and the game commenced accordingly.

"Are you strong at *écarté*?" enquired Mr. Crashem, pocketing the third half-crown, and turning up his seventh king with a coolness and presence of mind that did him immense credit, when we take into consideration the risk he was running.

"Not very," returned Mr. Winkle, glancing hastily over a hand composed of three eights, one nine, and one ten, of which none was a trump.

"Good players always say *that*," observed Mr. Crashem, placidly arranging upon his knees five picture cards of high *calibre*. "But I'm afraid you ain't lucky to-day? By the bye—did you ever hear of the match I played at chess with the ambassador from the king of the Uninhabited Islands? That *was* a match, or my name isn't Crashem! I gave him a queen, the two castles, and a bishop—and beat him in fifteen minutes by Lord Bugden's chronometer-watch. There's the king again, I declare!" added Mr. Crashem, while M. Dumont shrugged up his shoulders, smiled, but said nothing.

When the love-sick maiden is reclining on a flowery bank, by the side of a meandering stream, pondering on her passion, and enjoying the stilly calmness of the evening, a clap of thunder may suddenly arouse her from her delightful reverie. When the man about town is luxuriating in the coffee-room of an hotel, on a bottle of claret and a broiled fowl, the unhallowed touch of the sheriff's officer's hand upon his shoulder not unfrequently disturbs his enjoyment. So it was on the present occasion: for—to pursue the approved method adopted by novelists to introduce a circumstance of such import—at the very moment, when Mr. Winkle was quietly shuffling the cards, having handed over to Mr. Crashem another English half-crown, the voice of Mr. Pickwick fell upon his ears.

"What!" exclaimed that gentleman, awaking from his slumbers, like a giant refreshed with wine—"are you gambling again, Mr. Winkle, and losing the money which belongs as much to your wife and children as to yourself?"

"We are not playing for much, my dear friend," observed Mr. Winkle, in a trembling voice.

"And, pray, Sir—what *are* you playing for?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, in a tone of extreme irascibility.

"Only two bob and a bender!" replied Mr. Winkle, animated by a laudable and exemplary desire to display any acquisition of knowledge he might obtain in his continental tour.

"Do you want to insult me, Sir?" cried the indignant Mr. Pickwick; "or is it your wish to alienate from your interests for ever an old and tried friend?"

Mr. Winkle's voice was lost in sobs—the generous hero of these memoirs was immediately pacified by such symptoms of contrition—and in a moment the hand of the immortal Pickwick grasped that of the penitent Winkle, just as the diligence entered the streets of Boulogne-sur-Mer at a rapid pace.

It is not our intention to detail the very *minutiæ* of the adventures connected with the continental tour of Mr. Pickwick and his followers. We shall therefore merely observe that a small case bottle of brandy and a large parcel of sandwiches were attacked and disposed of by the gentlemen occupying the first four seats of the *interieur*—that M. Dumont politely refused, in very good English, to partake of the repast—that Mr. Boozie informed his fellow travellers how he was once nearly choked by a ham-sandwich, when he again corrected himself, and stated that it was occasioned by a beef-sandwich—and that Mr. Crashem, the cards having been eschewed for the moment, related a number of pleasant anecdotes, chiefly connected with himself, his family, or his noble acquaintances, and remarkable for the probability and air of truth with which they were vested. We shall not be tedious on these subjects, but merely state that at about seven o'clock in the evening the diligence entered the very cheerful and crowded streets of Montreuil, at which town the passengers were to dine.

As several English gentlemen were staying at the hotel where the diligence stopped—the neighbourhood of Montreuil being famous for game, and the said gentlemen being just able in the shooting season to emancipate themselves from the demands of their creditors at Boulogne, Calais, Saint-Omer, &c., and take a trip to Montreuil—the *table-d'hote* was numerously attended. Mr. Pickwick and his companions seated themselves next to each other at the head of the long table, and Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle were about to commence a desperate attack upon certain succulent viands that stood near them, when Mr. Pickwick, his expressive countenance assuming an aspect of seriousness not unmixed with severity, rebuked his followers for an omission of which they had been guilty, and, with the gravity which that great man knew so well how to adopt, rose slowly from his chair, and, with extended arms, in a solemn and impressive tone of voice, said Grace. Having thus exemplified his devotion, Mr. Pickwick sunk into his seat, and in an instant made a deep incision in a leg of mutton which stood before him. Such an act of piety excited the risible feelings of all present, as well as the utmost astonishment of the sporting gentlemen, who made sundry pleasant and pointed remarks thereupon; and lest their observations should be deemed nothing but fulsome flattery by Mr. Pickwick and his friends, they considerately disguised their sentiments in a figurative language of their own.

"A parish prig, I'll bet a pound," cried one.

"Wouldn't patter badly in a hum-box!" observed a second.

"Nice chap for a small tea party!" suggested a third.

"Hasn't got a bad twist of his own, though!" remarked a fourth.

"Why do you flatter the gentleman?" remonstrated a fifth.

And a sixth might have made a similar observation, had not a sudden disturbance in the passage put a stop to the tributes of admiration which Mr. Pickwick's exemplary conduct had called forth.

"Not on no account!" cried a loud voice in the adjoining corridor. "You don't think to come that 'ere gammon over me, my fine feller —do you now? Vy, I should con-sider myself more wulgar than the beatesses in the field, if I vas to listen to your adwice, as the chimbley-sweep said ven they asked him to dine at a radical conwivial meetin'."

"Tupman, my dear fellow," demanded Mr. Pickwick, holding a bottle of wine in one hand and a glass in the other, "pray see what they are about now with my servant."

"Yes—do," echoed Mr. Crashem: and Mr. Tupman accordingly issued into the passage, where he found Mr. Weller disputing with a person who appeared to be the landlord of the hotel.

"Here's von 'o my mas'ers, you perwokin' French thief," cried Mr. Weller, touching his hat as the sleek and oily countenance of Mr. Tupman emerged to his view: "and now to the pint, my little cock-i'-vax, as the patient schule-mas'er observed to the scollard vich tried to shuffle off vith a parcel o' lies."

"What is the matter, Sam?" enquired Mr. Tupman.

"Just this, Sir," replied Mr. Weller, "that this chap is a-tryin' to persuade me to grub vith my superiors, as if they vos my eq-vals."

"Perhaps it is the fashion in France, Sam," mildly suggested Mr. Tupman; "and while I think of it, the conductor of the diligence is himself seated at the same table with us."

"Then, in that case," exclaimed Mr. Weller, after a moment's reflection, "I may as vell do it as another, as the young prig observed to the old 'un ven he seed him filch a pocket-ankercher;"—and with these words Mr. Weller followed Mr. Tupman into the *table-d'hote* room, and seated himself at a respectable distance from his master.

"Very good spread, this," observed Mr. Winkle, casting an approving glance up the long table; "puts me in mind of a dinner on a race-course, or cricket-ground."

"Nothing to what you see in Turkey, my dear fellow," ejaculated Mr. Crashem. "There, the very omnibuses have *table-d'hotes*; and for a couple of francs you can dine, and go from one end of Constantinople to the other at the same time. Devilish convenient for the merchants, eh?"

Mr. Winkle nodded assent: Mr. Pickwick looked incredulous; and the sporting characters at the other end of the table signified their astonishment at Mr. Crashem's statement, through the *medium* of such expressive terms as "gammon," "blarney," "gag," &c. Mr. Crashem's lofty mind was not to be daunted by the conduct of that portion of his audience whose weak intellect could not comprehend the vastness of the enterprises undertaken by the Turks, and carried into effect by that very enlightened people; he accordingly assured the sporting characters "that they were no gentlemen," and hinted "that if his respect for the great man with whom he had the honour to travel did not withhold him, he should proceed to take summary vengeance upon their carcasses, without any compunction or mercy."

"He'll do that to-morrow," cried one of the individuals thus menaced.

"When he gets up a little earlier," added a second.

"Trust him," exclaimed a third: "he'll flare up about the same time that the Deccan prize-money is paid."

"Talking of the Deccan prize-money," observed Mr. Crashem to his friends, while his countenance was veiled in blushes, as the modern novelist says; "my father made his fortune by that business. Odd—wasn't it?"

"I suppose he was lucky enough to get paid," said Mr. Pickwick, eyeing his new friend somewhat suspiciously.

"Oh! no—that would have spoilt all!" cried Mr. Crashem, emphatically.

"Spoilt all—how?" enquired Mr. Winkle, ever ready to gather instruction from those who knew more than himself.

"If it had been paid, there would have been an end of it," explained Mr. Crashem; "but the expectation, my dear fellow—the expectation was the thing! My father raised all his share with the money-lenders seven times over; and his most fervent prayer has ever been that the affair may never be settled. The delay is a good ten thousand a-year to him, thank God."

Mr. Winkle was about to express his astonishment at this little anecdote, and Mr. Pickwick began to fancy that the Crashem family was not the most immaculate nor particular in the world, when the *conducteur* finished his cup of coffee, and rose from his chair with the satisfaction of a man who had eaten a good dinner. This was a signal for the passengers to make an end of their repast; accordingly, Mr. Pickwick called for the account, and paid for himself, his friends, and domestic, and Mr. Crashem, that latter gentleman, with a view to promote the adoption of regular and proper arrangements, and to avoid confusion, having wisely suggested that there should be only one cashier, and having elected Mr. Pickwick by his single suffrage to fill that important and honourable post. And in laying these facts before our readers, it is but due to the memory of Mr. Pickwick, to declare that he acquitted himself in his new office to the entire satisfaction of him through whose interest he had obtained it.

The passengers resumed their seats in the diligence, and the vehicle moved onward at a more rapid rate than when it commenced its journey. The fact is, that the nearer the traveller approaches to Paris, the better he finds the relays of horses and the stables of the post-masters. But as Mr. Pickwick did not make this reflection at the particular time to which we are alluding, we shall hasten to pursue the thread of our narrative, and detail the circumstances of it in their proper order.

The dinner, or the wine, had apparently unlocked the tongue of the French gentleman who had hitherto remained silent. A casual observation which he made to Mr. Pickwick in very good English, enabled that immortal personage to discover that M. Dumont was neither an ill-informed nor an ill-mannered man; and as the conversation gradually assumed a more determined appearance of lasting some time, Mr. Pickwick and his companions were amused and instructed by the various anecdotes and tales which the before silent gentleman told in an easy but impressive manner. The topic of discourse to which he recurred more frequently than to any other, was the organisation and functions of the French Gendarmerie or Police; and on this subject he appeared quite at home.

"You may marvel," said M. Dumont, at the conclusion of an anec-

dote of which the notorious Vidocq was the hero,—"you may marvel at the apparant intimacy of my acquaintance with the private history of the French police; but your wonder will cease when I inform you that I myself am a Gendarme!"

"A Gendarme!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, turning ashy pale, and almost falling forward on Mr. Adolphus Crashem, who uttered a similar ejaculation, and gave a similar start.

"Yes—gentlemen—a Gendarme!" added M. Dumont, with a laugh, for his oral organs had caught the sound of the sudden movement the declaration of his profession had occasioned, although it was too dark to distinguish the countenances which turned so very pale. "But you need not be afraid of me: I am in plain clothes now—and am returning to Paris to resume my functions as lieutenant of Gendarmes."

"A singular life, Sir—is it not?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Very," replied Dumont, with something of bitterness in his manner; "so singular, that when I first became a Gendarme, I had to steel my heart against the supplications of beauty, the tears of innocence, the murmurs of despair! In the exercise of my duty, I had to tear a son away from his widowed mother—a daughter from her dependent sire—a parent from his young family. I dared not connive at the concealment of a crime—'twas mine to drag before a severe tribunal the young and the inexperienced as well as the old and hardened. Oh! Sir—at my knees I have seen an agonizing wife, imploring the release of a criminal husband—or a fond husband supplicating me to cheat justice of its due, and allow his wife to remain with him and her children. I have separated lovers—by leaving one to pine away in misery and woe, and by dragging the other to an ignominious doom. I have, in fine, closed my breast against those sympathies and amenities which fill your's and your companions'!"

There was a pause of some minutes, when the Gendarme had ceased speaking, and a shudder passed over the individuals who listened to this strange avowal. The silence was at length broken by Mr. Pickwick, who enquired of M. Dumont how he had first become a member of the corps; and the interrogation, being readily answered, gave rise to the following tale.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GENDARME'S TALE.

HIS EARLY REMINISCENCES.—HECTOR DUMONT.—THE PREFECT OF POLICE.—HOW HE BECOMES A GENDARME.

My earliest recollections were none of the most pleasurable description. The noise of cannon thundered in my ears—the clash of deadly weapons filled my infant soul with alarm. As I have been since informed, I was seated on the stump of a tree near a pile of mangled corpses—the body of a woman lay at a little distance—and to those breathless remains I frequently pointed in as great an excess of grief as a child of my tender age could know: indeed, there is every

reason to believe that my mother was a sutler or *vivandiere* to the camp, and was killed by a random shot during the engagement. In the midst of that scene of horror, the whole extent of which my mind could not of course comprehend, a friendly voice addressed me—a succouring arm raised me from the ground—and a morsel of stale bread or cake was thrust into my hand. I looked up—and the tall form of a soldier met my timid gaze. He bade me follow him—I obeyed mechanically—and he led me to a place of safety, at some little distance from the scene of warfare, where he left me while he rejoined the fight.

In a short time he returned, and, in as soothing a tone of voice as he could assume, endeavoured to assuage my grief, declaring he would be a father to me. I may here mention that he was one of the Emperor's body-guard, and that his horse had been killed under him a few minutes before he had discovered me on the field of battle. That field was the scene of one of Napoleon's most glorious victories; and that battle was Austerlitz!

Dumont—for such was the name of the benevolent *cuirassier*—fulfilled his promise, and acted a father's—nay, more than a father's part towards me. But a severe wound, which he had received in a desperate attack against the Austrian guards, obliged him to accept a retiring pension, and return to France. He did not forget his little charge; on the contrary—I was a source of infinite amusement and delight to my worthy benefactor during a wearisome journey. His care was divided between me and his uniform—that uniform, which had been in many a hard-fought field—that *cuirass*, which had turned the edge of many a weapon—that brazen helm, which had protected his brow in many a desperate charge against the serried ranks of the enemy.

At length we arrived in the neighbourhood of Paris; and when the lofty domes and spires of the sovereign city met my eyes—child, infant as I was—I leapt with delight. A glow of patriotic ardour and pride—as he has since more than once informed me—passed over the features of the veteran *cuirassier*, when the hundred towers of that vast Babel broke upon his sight, beneath a heaven as calm and as pure as the blue skies of Italy. The excellent old man! he glanced towards the red riband of the cross of the legion of honour which adorned his breast, and anticipated in a flood of joyous tears the felicity he was about to experience, when surrounded by his friends, and receiving the congratulations of his numerous acquaintance on his honours and his safe return.

I shall pass over the particulars attending our entry into Paris, the circumstances of which did not make so vivid an impression upon my memory as the events immediately preceding. And now—as, indeed, I have done heretofore—I must frequently fill up those blanks, which would otherwise necessarily occur in the course of my early history, by the facts and incidents my kind guardian subsequently related to me.

With the produce of the booty Dumont had acquired in the Austrian campaign, and with the arrears of his pay, we managed to live happily for some time: but he, like an old veteran soldier who is far from indifferent to pleasure, was not very anxious as to the future. At length—shortly after the return of the army to France, and of the

Emperor to Paris—poor Dumont one day found that his exchequer was totally exhausted. Had it not been for his solicitude on my account, his countenance would not have lost one iota of that happy expression which was its chief characteristic: but when his eye fell upon my delicate little frame, the hardy veteran wept! In vain did he utter his usual oaths of "*Mille Baionnettes!*" "*Mille Escadrons!*" &c.,—in vain did he twist and twirl his long moustachios, and contemplate his red riband—all was ineffectual—he could not conceal his emotions—and he wept.

Ashamed of having given way to those feelings, which in reality did him honour, Dumont hastened to the Garden of the Tuileries, to saunter beneath the green foliage of the trees, and compose his mind to reflect with calmness on the difficulties of his position, as well as to consider what steps he ought to pursue.

As he was lounging up the secluded walk in the middle, which now affords that fine view from the centre of the palace to the Triumphal Arch at the end of the Champs Elysées, the sound of hasty steps approaching aroused him from a painful reverie. He raised his eyes from the ground on which they had been hitherto bent, and his careless glance encountered the light blue eye of a little gentleman dressed in plain attire, with a small cocked-hat, and the legion of honour's emblem in his button-hole. Dumont did not look at the stranger twice, but he immediately suspected him to be an officer, and saluted him accordingly; having performed which ceremony, he again cast his eyes on the ground in a thoughtful manner. The mark of respect, with which he had accosted the military gentleman, was however duly returned; and the following dialogue ensued.

"Who are you?" enquired the little man.

"Hector Dumont," was the reply; "lately one of the veterans in his Majesty's Imperial Guard."

"Where did you obtain that cross?"

"At Austerlitz!" answered the old soldier, keeping his eyes fixed upon the ground, as he awaited fresh queries.

"And what are you doing now? how do you live?"

Dumont related the history of his difficulties with unsophisticated frankness.

"'Tis well!" said the little man, taking his tablets from his pocket: "where do you reside?"

Dumont mentioned his address, which his interrogator instantly wrote down, assuring the veteran at the same time that he should hear from him. A little of that curiosity, which we inherit from Dame Eve, now dispelled a portion of the timidity that Dumont naturally felt when conversing with one whom he knew to be his superior; and in a respectful tone of voice he said, "*Mon Capitaine*, I have now answered *your* queries: might *I* make bold to put one or two to you?"

"Proceed," returned the little man good-naturedly.

"Well, then," said Dumont, "I shall catechise you as you did me. What is your name?—Who are you?—Where did you obtain that cross?—And where do you live?"

"I shall reply as briefly as you have questioned me," cried the little man. "To your first query I answer, *Napoleon!*—To your

second, *Emperor of the French!* To your third, *When I first established the Order!*—And to your fourth, *At the Tuileries!*"

Dumont started at the solution of his first question, turned pale at the second, doffed his cap at the third, and sank upon his knees at the fourth.

"*Mon Empereur*—" he began; but his tongue clave to his mouth, and refused utterance to a syllable. He ventured to raise his head—the royal hero had passed on—and Dumont distinguished the Emperor hastily retracing his steps towards the palace, his arms folded across his breast, and his eyes inclined towards the ground.

"Fool that I was!" cried Dumont, rising—"not to have at once recognised Napoleon! But, as I live, he is much changed—and then I thought of nothing save mine own difficulties—he has certainly grown fatter lately—how affable and kind he was! to think that I should have spoken so familiarly to the Emperor—certainly, he *is* changed!"

Thus muttering to himself, Dumont hastily left the gardens of the Tuileries, and returned to his own humble dwelling, pondering in mingled fear and delight on his adventure with the greatest sovereign in the world!

Three days elapsed, and no tidings arrived from the Tuileries, as Dumont had been led to expect. But on the fourth morning, an *aid-de-camp*, followed by two men bearing a number of bags in their hands, entered our modest parlour, and enquired for "one Hector Dumont, late veteran in the Imperial Guard."

"I am called by that name," said the old soldier, rising from his chair, and saluting the *aid-de-camp*.

"His Majesty the Emperor sends you these," observed the officer, turning to the two men who accompanied him, and pointing to the bags, which were immediately placed upon the table: then, without waiting to be thanked, the *aid-de-camp* and his followers retired from the house.

Dumont contemplated the bags for some time in mute astonishment. At length he arose, murmured a prayer to heaven to bless the source of such extraordinary bounty, and proceeded to examine his newly acquired wealth. In some of the bags were gold pieces called after the name of the royal donor; in others were silver coins of six francs each. The whole formed an aggregate of twenty thousand francs—being fifteen thousand times more than any sum Dumont had ever yet possessed otherwise than in his dreams.

Such is the early history of myself, and of the contemporary adventures of my benefactor. A detailed account of the education he gave me, the universal kindness with which he treated me, and the various trifling changes that happened to us both on account of the successive political vicissitudes in France from time to time, would only be tedious without affording you any extraordinary degree of interest. I shall therefore pass all this by—and, having skipped over the anecdotes of many years, shall conclude this brief sketch with the adventure which decided my future position in life.

* * * *

In the Faubourg Saint Antoine, not a very great distance from the Place de la Bastille, was a small house, remarkable, amongst all others in the immediate vicinity, for its extreme cleanliness, the tranquillity

that reigned within its walls, and the happy seclusion in which its inmates dwelt. One evening—let me direct your attention to the little parlour of that respectable house—the supper was concluded, the servant was engaged in clearing away the plates and dishes, and the other two inmates of the room were sitting in silence, awaiting the departure of the domestic to commence their discourse. One was an aged veteran soldier, whose years had numbered some sixty-eight or sixty-nine; and the other was a young man of about three-and-twenty. The former was Hector Dumont—the latter was myself.

When the servant-girl had entirely cleared the table of its encumbrances, the old *cuirassier* lit his pipe, and motioned me to place the brandy upon the board. I obeyed, foreseeing at the same time that a serious conversation was about to ensue. Nor was I wrong in my conjecture. Dumont took several long whiffs of his pipe, drank a *petit verre de cognac*, and then addressed me as follows:—

"Alfred Dumont," said he,—for I enjoyed, and still do enjoy the use of my benefactor's patronymic, having none of my own,—"you are now arrived at that age when it is important to decide upon something for your future welfare in life. I have—thanks to the bounty of our great Emperor, many, many years ago—amassed a few crowns, and they have always been intended to forward your views, and place you in some honourable profession. I say *honourable*, because you bear my name;—it was never sullied, Alfred;—and I am certain you will not disgrace it. Therefore, my dear boy," continued the old man, very seriously, "you shall not be a tailor, because he steals more cloth than he uses; nor shall you be a grocer, because he puts sand into his sugar, and the leaves of currant-bushes into his tea, so that when you think you are drinking real bohea, you are imbibing an infernal mixture of vile herbs. A baker grinds bones to mingle with his flour; and a wine-merchant uses log-wood to adulterate his claret. A sausage-maker patronizes dog-stealers and cat-killers; and a *huissier** throws people into prison. As for the army and navy, they are useless in times of peace."

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried I, interrupting this fine dissertation on trades and professions, with a disconsolate look; "and what *does* remain, then, my dear father, for me to do?"

Old Dumont assumed an aspect so peculiarly knowing that one would have thought he had fallen upon an idea capable of confounding the politics of Talleyrand and Metternich themselves; and he winked his eye with such an extraordinary expression of cunning, that I imagined he meant to make a deputy or a judge of me at least. Full one minute elapsed in the execution of these telegraphic signs; and when he deemed it time to be more explanatory,—which measure was very necessary, considering the dull state of my comprehension,—I was on the tiptoe of curiosity and suspense.

"Alfred," said he, with awful importance, "I have been thinking you had better become a—"

"A what?" cried I in breathless haste.

"A Gendarme!" was the solemn reply.

I could not help recollecting that my worthy benefactor had re-

* Sheriff's officer, or bailiff.

fused to allow me to enter the profession, or embrace the calling of *huissier*, simply because it is the duty of that functionary to commit debtors to prison; and now he selected the *metier* of gendarme, whose chief employment consists in the pursuit and incarceration of felons. I, however, joyfully acceded to my guardian's proposal; for the handsome uniform, well-caparisoned horse, and important character of a gendarme won all my affections.

"'Tis well, then," said Dumont, when my assent had been dutifully made known; "to-morrow-morning we will pay our respects to *monseigneur* the Prefect of Police; and I have no doubt but that in the course of a very few days you may don your bearskin cap, and brace your yellow belt round your waist."

"Pray what are the principal duties of a gendarme?" enquired I, anxious to be made acquainted with the intricacies of my intended profession.

"Obey the Prefect's agents without daring to pry into their secrets—ask no questions of your officers, save on points of duty—never drink at *cabarets* with strangers—stop every one of ragged and suspicious appearance, and demand his passport—always refuse a bribe, but accept a present—smoke a short pipe, well blackened—and when you are in a public-house, talk of the bounty of your sovereign, and suffer a few words relative to the greatest man that ever lived to mingle with the encomiums you pass on the present king."

"And with these instructions as a guide, you think I may make a tolerably good gendarme?"

"A tolerable one!" cried the old man, striking his fist upon the table with tremendous vehemence, so that the brandy-bottle and the two *petits verres* performed a *pas de trois*: "a tolerable one!" he repeated—"an excellent one, you would say!"

And here the conversation took a turn totally uninteresting to you, were I to repeat it.

On the following morning we dressed ourselves in our very best attire, and by the help of a rickety cabriolet and drunken driver, arrived at the Quai des Orfevres, where we were set down opposite a gloomy building, the entrance to which resembles the gate of a felon's prison. This was the *Prefecture de Police*. The ancient *cuirassier* bade me tarry a moment under the frowning arch-way, while he went forward to solicit an audience of the mighty man, in whose keeping were the most important state secrets of the kingdom. In half an hour he returned, and desired me to follow him. We entered the large parallelogram which forms the court yard of the *Prefecture*, and turned into a narrow passage on the left-hand side. This dark corridor led us to a small antechamber, where several other individuals were awaiting their turns to be ushered into the presence of the Prefect. I know not by what magic the deed was accomplished; but it nevertheless is a fact, that my worthy benefactor and myself were summoned to wait upon the Prefect the moment our names were sent into his office, to the great annoyance of many who were congregated in the antechamber, and were anxiously expecting to be favoured with an audience.

We were introduced into a small, but neatly furnished apartment, in the middle of which was a large mahogany desk, covered almost

entirely with red velvet. Behind this desk sate a little old gentleman with gold spectacles of considerable dimensions, massive chains to his watch, and a magnificent brooch in his shirt. An eye-glass was appended to a riband that hung round his neck; and his fingers were covered with rings of great value. He was dressed in deep black—his face was haggard and wrinkled—his eye was sharp and piercing—and his few thin locks were as white as snow. I shuddered as I gazed upon this strange being—and my eyes involuntarily glanced around those walls within whose circuit many a cruel mandate had been signed, many a deadly deed ordered to be committed, and many a purse transferred by the hand of bribery to that of corruption. The very decrees of Danton and Robespierre appeared to be traced in letters of blood upon the ceiling; and my imagination recalled to my memory the days of Fouchet. It is not to be wondered at, then, if I trembled as I stood in the presence of one of his successors.

"Your business?" was the laconic question addressed to the veteran of the imperial guard.

"I have already had the honour"—began the *cuirassier*.

"Your name, then?" interrupted his lordship.

"Hector Dumont," was the reply.

"I recollect: and that is your adopted son?" said the Prefect; then, without giving my benefactor time to answer this latter query, his lordship proceeded;—"and it is of him that you would wish to make a gendarme? Can he be faithful to his employers?"

"As the Newfoundland dog to his master."

"Secret and daring?"

"Secret as the grave; daring as Napole—as—as a lion."

"Proof against bribery?"

"As your lordship's self."

"And incapable of giving way to the dictates of curiosity?" continued the Prefect, with a faint smile at Dumont's last simile, which he probably knew to be incorrect.

All these questions were answered to the satisfaction of the Prefect, and I was informed that in a few days my appointment would be named, and my commission duly forwarded to me at our residence in the Faubourg Saint Antoine. My excellent benefactor was overjoyed at the success of our visit, and when we were once more in our little parlour at home, he caught me in his arms, and embraced me long and fervently. I expressed myself in meet terms of gratitude for that and all other favours, and for the next two or three days dreamt of nothing but caparisoned horses, glittering swords, loaded carabines, and fugitive felons in whose pursuit I was engaged.

At length the promised *brevet* arrived, and the tailor was put in immediate requisition for my uniform, &c., &c. The old Dumont supplied me liberally with money to make the various purchases I required, and in the course of a week I was prepared to enter upon the performance of my new duties. I was accordingly appointed to serve in the *arrondissement* or quarter to which the *Prefecture de Police* itself belonged; and, my heart being elated with joy, I betook myself to my post. I was well received by my future comrades, who took all possible pains to initiate me into the mysteries of the profession, and make me familiar with my various duties.

Since that period I have passed through a variety of changing scenes—have encountered a thousand singular adventures—and could relate tales that would soften into pity the heart of a misanthrope, —wring tears from the eyes of the most obdurate and unfeeling, and afford such a lesson to the young and innocent that no farther warning would be necessary to make them avoid the crooked paths of vice, and pursue the course of rectitude and virtue. At present I shall weary you no longer with my *égoisme*—on a future occasion I may tell you more.

When the Gendarme had thus brought his interesting tale to a conclusion, he of course received the thanks of his audience; and Mr. Pickwick, in order to convince M. Dumont that he had been an attentive and sleepless listener, made certain comments on the incidents of the narrative, and discussed the whole transaction that had taken place in the Prefecture, as if he had been all his life familiar with the mysteries of the French police. But the conversation gradually became languid—Mr. Boozie declared that he was not at all sleepy, and then effectually contradicted himself by snoring aloud—Mr. Crashem swore that he was too much accustomed to travel ever to slumber in a vehicle, and immediately tumbled into Mr. Winkle's lap—and Messieurs Pickwick and Tupman commenced an agreeable little duet, which they performed together through the *medium* of their noses, to the great satisfaction of M. Dumont. In fine, the passengers in the *interieur* were all soon labouring under the happy influence of Morpheus; and of this state of quiescence and oblivious beatitude shall we take advantage, to introduce to the reader a few of Mr. Pickwick's private notes taken by that gentleman at Meurice's hotel at Calais, and descriptive of the events immediately preceding his arrival at the town where he first burst in all his glory on the eyes of the great French nation.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. SNODGRASS PROVES HIMSELF TO BE A POET.—PARTICULARS RE LATED IN MR. PICKWICK'S JOURNAL.—MEURICE'S HOTEL IN PARIS. —MR. TIMS AND MR. SUGDEN.

To Mr. Pickwick's private journal we are indebted for the following particulars of his journey from Dulwich to Calais; and as every circumstance connected with either the private or the public proceedings of this extraordinary man is calculated not only to interest the reader, but also to instruct and improve his mind, we shall not omit a duty we owe to ourselves and to mankind in general, but shall execute the important trust, confided to us, with the utmost impartiality. We accordingly lay the following important memoranda before the public:—

PASSAGES FROM THE PRIVATE JOURNAL OF SAMUEL PICKWICK, ESQ.

November 11*th*, 1834.—Awoke this morning at seven o'clock, and ordered Sam to bring me a bottle of soda-water. Felt exceedingly

thirsty, and a partial head-ache. Do not know whether the anxiety which we experience on the eve of travelling, or the port-wine I drank last night at Snodgrass's house, could be the cause of these disagreeable sensations. Questioned Sam on the subject, and thought he laughed slily. Excellent-hearted fellow, that Sam!

Was a quarter of an hour too early for my breakfast, so took up the biography of myself and friends, and glanced cursorily over the notes which I have prepared for my editor, "Boz." Found that in 1827 I had made Mr. Jingle declare himself to have written a poem on the French Revolution, which only took place in 1830. Could not mean the first Revolution, as Mr. Jingle was present (according to my notes) at the one of which he wrote; and he was not born when the first began. Must think of this: there is a grievous error somewhere.

Discovered another error. In the *memoranda* of a speech which I made on the night before my first sally-forth in search of adventures in 1827, I am represented to have said that "philanthropy was my *Swing!*" Now the incendiary Swing—the fabled illuminator of all the hay-stacks in the kingdom—had not then acquired his name, nor was he known. Must correct this error also.*

Made a hearty breakfast without any accident worth noticing, save that little James Weller, in playful sport, threw an egg on my tights, while his brother, in sympathetic mirth, decamped with my toast. Tupman and Winkle then made their appearance, and we prepared to set forth on our travels. Just as we were about to depart, received the following kind effusion from Snodgrass, written on pink paper which had been perfumed with musk. *Mem.*—'Tis the first specimen of his poetic genius I ever saw; but I always knew he *was* a poet. Indeed, I always said so,—and my friends thought as much.

"Pickwick, immortal man! 'tis thine
To foreign lands to pass;
And, pitiless, you leave to pine
Your own sincere Snodgrass!
Upon the paper, as I write,
My burning tears I sprinkle,
And ev'ry fervent prayer unite
For Tupman, you, and Winkle!

"Go,—Pickwick, go! 'Tis thine to brave
The perils of the deep;
And, oh! while thou art on the wave,
May whales and sword-fish sleep!
Thy mission is divinely plann'd—
Angels have echo'd, 'Up, man!
Go forth unto a foreign land
With Winkle and with Tupman!'

"Illustrious names! But thou, bright star,
To thee ten millions raise
Admiring eyes—on thee afar
Mankind is pleas'd to gaze!

* We are sorry to find that Mr. Pickwick omitted these necessary corrections; and that his Editor, "Boz," has also unaccountably suffered them to remain.

And Fame is ready to recite
The deeds that thou shalt tell her;
Great planet! with thy satellite,
Th' immortal Samuel Weller!

"Pickwick! with Winkle as thy spear,
And Tupman as thy shield,
Armies of French thou need'st not fear
To combat in the field.
And when your foes, to danger blind,
Lie scattered on the sod-grass,
A laureate poet thou shalt find
In me—Augustus Snodgrass!

"Whilst thou art roaming far away,
In search of fresh renown,
And while I hear thy name each day
The topic of the town;
Dull as a rush-light that appears
As if it had a sick wick,
'Tis mine to pass the day in tears
During thine absence, Pickwick!"

Read this effusion three times. Tupman, rather angry at being taken for a shield,—thought it alluded to the width of his person. Winkle in high spirits at the allusion to his courage. After all, Snodgrass is a very clever fellow.

At length safely mounted on the top of the coach, Tupman next to an old lady to whom he has already offered a biscuit, and Sam regaling the guard from a case-bottle full of brandy. Stopped at Shooters' Hill, and saw old Mr. Weller, who, in his own peculiarly native and original language, assured us that he is "much better in a public than if he had kept a pike." Could not help admiring the notice to travellers that is painted in large letters over the door of old Mr. Weller's inn. It ran as follows:—

"This is the house of Tony Weller—
Good stabling,—good beds,—and good cellar;
All them as enters in it,
Would rayther stay an hour than a minute."

Strongly suspect Snodgrass wrote this: very much in his style. The grammar may have been perverted by the artizan who printed the letters. Nothing but poetry to-day.

Took a glass of ale with old Mr. Weller to drink his health—a *ditto* of bitters to correct the acidity of the ale—and a *ditto* of hot brandy-and-water to keep us warm outside the coach. Tupman insisted upon the old lady's taking a glass of *ditto* also. I did not see the necessity of this. Winkle joined us in each *ditto*.

Unfortunate gentleman, who sate near us, suddenly recollected he had forgotten his purse. He had known me intimately in my younger days;—dined with my uncle, he said, fourteen years ago, with whom he had left his watch, and had never called for it since. Conversation turning on heraldic blazonry, unfortunate gentleman told me that his uncle's escutcheon bore the arms of Lombardy. Man of some rank,

I suppose. Asked me if I could lend him a *quid*. Assured him I did not carry tobacco about with me. Informed me that he had had a great many yellow-boys at his command once. A slave-owner, I presume. Lent him a sovereign: and Sam afterwards assured me that it was nothing but a *go*. By this he meant *trick*. Full of playful synonymes, that Sam!

Stopped and dined at Canterbury. Had time to visit the cathedral, so we all hastened thither, as the coach will not stop longer than a certain time. Missed our way. Stepped up to a beggar, who was holding a dog by a string, at the corner of a street, and offered him sixpence if he would show us the way. Beggar replied that he couldn't, but that his dog would. Looked at him in astonishment, and discovered that he was blind. Gave him some half-pence, declined to deprive him of so clever a guide, and found another. *Mem.*—This guide was a human being.

Canterbury cathedral is a very handsome building. Saw the blood of Thomas-à-Becket upon the very stone where his assassins murdered him. Sam informed us that he had been "put up to snuff"—as he facetiously expressed himself—about this matter, and assured me that the sexton made a point of keeping the said stone well coloured with bull's blood, so often as circumstances required. Tupman looked doubtful,—and Winkle expressed his unalterable disbelief of Sam' statement.

Proceeded on our journey to Dover. Tupman remarked that the Kentish girls are particularly fine. I do not know that he is altogether wrong. Travelling is in a very unsettled state on this road. The opposition coaches should be suppressed by government. The guard of our coach was perpetually telling the driver "to hit the horses on the raw, as they hadn't any friends!" Such cruelty to unfriended animals is perfectly atrocious.

Slept at Dover, and was grievously bitten by bugs.

November 12th, 1834.—Embarked on board a steam-boat for the first time in our lives. Became acquainted with a dark gentleman called "a stoker," who explained to us the principles and technicalities of the steam-engine. Cannot say that I perfectly understood the matter; but Winkle appeared to be fully at home with it, which was very astonishing when we consider his former ignorance of such engines. However, in case "the stoker's" elucidation may interest posterity, subjoin it, word for word, as I took it down in my note-book at the time.—"This 'ere furnance, gen'lmen, heats that 'ere water, and that 'ere water is in this 'ere biler; and that there pistern-rod is moved up and down by the steam from this 'ere biler; and them 'ere pisterns act upon them rods, which turns the axles of the paddles, and the paddles their-selves in consequence."

"Then it *is* possible for a boiler to burst?" observed Mr. Tupman with a very visible shudder.

"Possible!" exclaimed the man, as if he were deeply insulted by the bare doubt implied in my friend's remark. "I rather think it is possible—and what's more too, it very often *does* burst."

Feel myself bound to remark that Winkle manifests on every occasion a great regard for our several safeties. On hearing "the stoker's" reply to Tupman's question, he roared out "murder!" and, ran frant-

cally up the ladder to request the captain to put back: but "the stoker" qualified his statement in time, by assuring us that it was only in America such things ever occurred. We accordingly suffered the captain to continue the adventurous voyage.

In three hours—rather a long passage, I was informed, the French steam-boat beating us by five-and-twenty minutes, to the great annoyance of Captain String, who commanded the vessel in which we were —we entered Calais harbour. There is a long wooden pier of admirable structure on one side, and a small fort on the other. The pier is a mile in length, and is a favourite resort, the captain informed me, for the unfortunate Englishmen whose qualifications for exile have been obtained through the medium of certain little extravagancies and unpaid liabilities.

The spires of the town-hall, the light-house, and the tower of the church, are the most remarkable objects that strike the eye on arrival at Calais. The sky has pretty nearly the same appearance here as in England; and the colour of the ocean remains the same. The sand-hills on the right-hand side of the harbour as you go towards the town, form an interesting variety to the surrounding scenes, and afford a pleasant seclusion, where a duel may be fought in tranquillity without fear of interruption.

Having taken advantage of the momentous period when Mr. Pickwick and his companions filled the *interieur* of the diligence with a sweet concert of nasal music, to lay the above important notes before the reader, we must now request the same intelligent audience to suppose that the morning has just dawned, that the diligence is entering the episcopal town of Beauvais, and that Mr. Pickwick and his companions are awaking one after the other. An excellent breakfast at the above-mentioned place awaited them; and certain roast turkeys, game, pigeons, and bottles of wine, aided by little loaves of bread and large cups of coffee, were done ample justice to by the hungry travellers. Mr. Crashem enquired of the conductor how long the diligence usually waited; and on receiving a reply—through the medium of the waiter—that it could only tarry half an hour, he expressed his regret at not being able to call on his particular and intimate friend, the Bishop of Beauvais. Mr. Winkle sympathized in Mr. Crashem's mortification at this disappointment—Mr. Boozie remarked that it was an excellent turkey of which he was eating, and then declared himself to be in error, as it was a fowl—and the gendarme drank raw brandy with the conductor of the diligence.

"Fine mornin', Sir," said Mr. Weller, touching his hat, and addressing himself to his master, during the last five minutes of the prescribed half-hour, and when the travellers were about to resume their respective seats in the diligence. "Fine mornin', Sir."

"Nice and frosty, Sam," returned Mr. Pickwick, whose nose was blue with the cold. "Healthy weather, this."

"And seasonable, Sir," added Mr. Weller, "as the boy said ven he turned the cat out vithout her skin in the dog-days."

"Pleasant travelling, this, Sam," observed Mr. Pickwick, smiling at his faithful servant's remark.

"Wery, Sir," answered that gentleman. "Von doesn't stand no chance o' gettin' von's brains dashed out on account o' extra welocity; and the osses gets along at a gen-teel and tidy pace. There's a gen'l-man in the im-perial along vith me as comes to Paris every fortnit or so."

"Some great traveller, I presume," said Mr. Pickwick; "or the correspondent of a newspaper—or a speculator in the funds—"

"Out again, Sir, as the parson said to his pipe," returned Mr. Weller. "He's a smuggler, Sir."

"A smuggler!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands.

"Yes, Sir. A smuggler as deals in French vatches, and French gloves, and other small articles in the same vay."

Mr. Weller's explanation was cut short by the arrival of the *conducteur*, and when the travellers were again ensconced in their respective seats the diligence proceeded towards Paris.

Nothing of any consequence occurred during the remainder of the journey. The gendarme amused his fellow-travellers with a variety of interesting anecdotes; and Mr. Adolphus Crashem put them in possession of many important facts relative to his own family and the community of Turks amongst whom he had sojourned. He occasionally took them to Morocco, Algiers, or Tunis, and proved himself to be one of the greatest living travellers.

At about six o'clock in the evening, the diligence entered the first city in the world by the Faubourg St. Denis. At the barriers, the custom-house officers enquired if the passengers had any thing in their possessions upon which duty might be demanded; and on receiving answers in the negative, the vehicle was suffered to proceed. As it traversed the suburban streets, the shops gradually became more magnificent, the buildings more imposing, and the equipages more numerous; and when the diligence crossed the boulevards, a single glance on either side convinced the traveller that he was penetrating into the heart of a mighty, a great, and a populous city. With amazing rapidity did the diligence proceed towards the place of its destination, amongst a crowd of carts, hackney-coaches, cabriolets, &c.; and in due time it turned into the spacious yard of the Messageries of Laffitte and Caillard, in the Rue St. Honoré.

The baggage was speedily unpacked—the fares paid by the cashier whom Mr. Adolphus Crashem had so prudently elected—and a hackney-coach was speedily procured. M. Dumont, who had apparently conceived a great friendship for Mr. Pickwick, handed that gentleman his card ere he took leave; and Mr. Boozie, who, upon the express invitation of Mr. Crashem, had agreed to join the party and accompany them to Meurice's hotel, was rescued from a quarrel with the conductor of the diligence, the said Mr. Boozie having declared that he had paid the whole of his fare, and only recollecting his mistake and pronouncing himself "under an error" when the clerk at the office was about to detain his baggage.

By the aid of a hackney-coach, the three Pickwickians, Mr. Crashem, Mr. Boozie, and Mr. Weller were conveyed to that queen of streets, the Rue de Rivoli, and were set down at the very gate of that prince of caravanserays, Meurice's hotel. It is true that M. Cailliez, the manager of that splendid establishment for the widow whose occupations are rather those of love than business, made a slight

grimace when he saw a simple hackney-coach instead of a travelling carriage stop at the entrance to the hotel; but his countenance immediately changed and assumed an expression of blandness and satisfaction, when the respectable form of Mr. Pickwick emerged to view. It is also true—and we will not attempt to deny the fact—that Mr. Pickwick's expressive face was spotted with mud—that his hair was unkempt, and his beard unshaven—that his shoes wanted blacking, and his gaiters a brush—and that, if he had not looked like himself—that is, like Mr. Pickwick—he might have been taken for a sheep-stealer: it is also true that Mr. Winkle looked most miserable, and Mr. Tupman most inexpressibly seedy—that Mr. Adolphus Crashem was most rakish, Mr. Boozie most stolid, and Mr. Weller most impudent; but it is equally true that they were all great men, and boasted as their leader, the most extraordinary one of the age. This, as they descended from the vehicle, must have struck M. Cailliez immediately, and probably did so; unless, as certain malicious commentators have observed, the quantity of luggage which accompanied the travellers—Mr. Crashem excepted—were the soothing conciliators in the mind of Madame Meurice's all-seeing deputy.

"This is Mr. Pickwick, Sir," said Mr. Crashem, in a loud tone of voice, addressing himself to M. Cailliez, and indicating Mr. Pickwick by inflicting a most violent punch between the ribs of that immortal gentleman, which caused the same immortal gentleman to give so sudden a start, that M. Cailliez put himself into a singular and graceful attitude of defence, not knowing whether a deadly attack were not meditated upon his person.

"*This* is Mr. Pickwick, I say," exclaimed Mr. Crashem a second time.

M. Cailliez bowed, and tried to look amazingly pleased, while Mr. Pickwick looked as amazingly foolish, being aware that a dozen English grooms, tigers, lacqueys, and dependants were grinning at him and his companions on all sides.

"Private rooms, gentlemen?" said M. Cailliez in very good English.

"Certainly!" responded Mr. Pickwick; "and let us have a chop as soon as possible; for—I don't know how it may be with you, Tupman—but I'm rather hungry."

"I once had a mutton chop," commenced Mr. Boozie, addressing himself to M. Cailliez, "which was not—but, no—I'm telling you another lie—'twas a beef-steak, when I recollect—"

"Private rooms immediately, gentlemen," cried the bewildered M. Cailliez; while Mr. Adolphus Crashem reminded Mr. Pickwick that he had made a slight mistake in asking for a chop at Meurice's hotel. Mr. Pickwick immediately saw his error, and, by way of correcting it, desired his monitor to act as caterer for that evening.

Mr. Tupman now concluded a small colloquy that had taken place between him and Madame Cailliez, while the above conversation was going on—Mr. Winkle rejoined the party, having succeeded in intimidating a young gentleman of thirteen who was making faces at him—and Mr. Weller brought to a termination a slight dispute he had deemed it necessary to maintain with a German courier who spoke all languages; so that our travellers were prepared to follow the wondering M. Cailliez to the apartments he was about to conduct them to.

"It must be something very slap up," exclaimed Mr. Adolphus Crashem, in a menacing tone of voice, as the whole party followed M. Cailliez up a wide and handsome staircase to a suite of apartments looking upon the Gardens of the Tuileries, and not higher than the fourth floor above the *entresol*. Mr. Crashem's injunction had appeared to produce some effect; for when the extreme height of the said apartments from the ground was objected to by Mr. Pickwick, the first floor was immediately pronounced to be vacant.

"I am only afraid, gentlemen, objected M. Cailliez, "that you will find it *rather* dear."

"Nonsense!" cried Mr. Crashem, with a most noble disdain of expense; "name your own price."

"Only two thousand francs a month," answered M. Cailliez, with an engaging smile.

"Eighty pounds!" ejaculated Mr. Crashem, rattling an immense quantity of five-franc pieces in the pocket of his mysterious rough blue coat. "Well—that's not very dear, either."

"It is too dear for *me*," cried Mr. Pickwick, sternly, his forehead contracting into wrinkles and displaying to considerable advantage the large spots of mud that soiled his skin. "Let us take the fourth floor, and settle ourselves at once."

A bargain was thereupon immediately struck, and the travellers were speedily installed in their new lodgings.

It being now necessary to elect a general caterer and a general president, for the express behoof of the little community, Mr. Adolphus Crashem undertook the laborious functions of the former office, and Mr. Pickwick was of course nominated to administer those of the latter. These matters having been arranged to the satisfaction of all whom they concerned, certain necessary ablutions and changes of raiment were immediately voted as the next ceremonies to be performed; and then a copious dinner, under the inspection of Mr. Crashem, was served up. This repast was prolonged till about ten o' clock, at which hour the travellers retired, each to his respective couch, with a mutual understanding that they were to rise early and commence their rambles in the great metropolis of France.

At about nine o'clock on the following morning, Mr. Weller, armed with certain mystic tin-pots, containing warm water, knocked at the respective doors of Messieurs Tupman and Winkle, deposited one of the said mystic pots at each, and then proceeded to "call the Emperor," as he very respectfully expressed himself to one of the waiters of the hotel.

"What! is it already time to get up?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, opening one eye, and still sleeping with the other.

Mr. Weller replied in the affirmative, and Mr. Pickwick succeeded in opening his second optic.

"Wery 'ansome cab at the door, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, as he arranged his master's shaving *apparatus*: "and a nice little tiger I see in it, too," added the domestic.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick: "quite a tame one, I hope, though, Sam—is it not?"

"Oh! wery tame, Sir," replied that gentleman: "the fact is, Sir, you might play vith him, and he vouldn't be over dangerous."

"How delightful!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands: "I once heard that Kean had a tame lion; but I never knew before of people keeping young tigers."

"Not at all uncommon, Sir," remarked Mr. Weller. "The on'y thing that strikes us ven talking o' tigers, is, that them as I alludes to ain't real vons, Sir."

"Stuffed, I presume," said Mr. Pickwick, "and put into the cabriolet as an ornament. Very picturesque, I dare say,"

"Out again, Sir," playfully observed Mr. Weller. "Them tigers air on'y small boys dressed up in tights and tops, Sir."

"Ah! I see,—a name for young servants," cried Mr. Pickwick. "But why are they called tigers, Sam?"

"To frighten avay duns, Sir," answered Mr. Weller, seriously. "Them tigers are the quietest hanimals living, Sir, as long as their mas'er's friends calls at the 'ouse: but if so be a creditor has the audacity to knock at the door, them chaps springs upon 'em like vild beastesses, and scratches their eyes out, or does them some other corporal harm, vich accounts for their nicknames o' tigers. Ven a tradesman brings in goods, they are ciwility his-self; but ven he is imprudent enough to ask for his money, no selvidges is vorser than them."

"Singular,—very singular!" cried Mr. Pickwick, gliding gracefully from his bed, and shivering from top to toe. "Cold morning, Sam,—is it not?"

"So cold, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, "that von is glad to put his hands any-vere, as the thief remarked ven he vos discovered vith his fingers in the gen'leman's pocket."

Mr. Pickwick's toilet was speedily completed, and he proceeded to the *salon* where he had dined the previous evening, and which formed a portion of the suite of apartments occupied by himself and his companions. Mr. Boozie and Mr. Adolphus Crashem were already waiting for his arrival to order breakfast, and when that meal was arranged on the table, Messieurs Tupman and Winkle also made their appearance.

"To-day we will devote to amusement," said Mr. Pickwick, smiling benignly on the assembled party; "and to-morrow, Winkle, you and I will transact the business with which your father entrusted you."

This resolution being seconded by Mr. Crashem and supported by Mr. Boozie, was carried unanimously.

"You'll rek-vire a walley, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, who was waiting upon his masters at the breakfast-table.

"Shall we, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick; "and why so?"

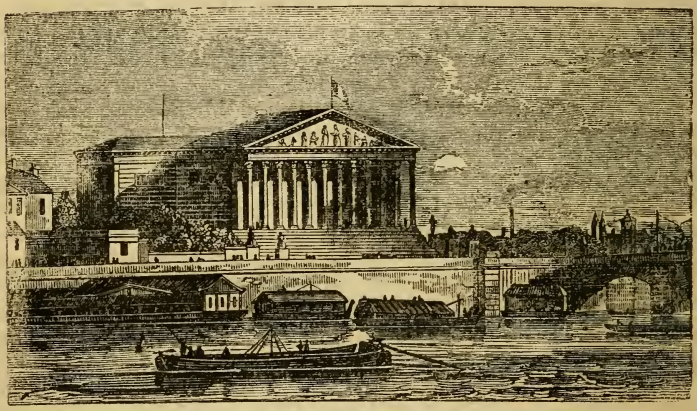
"'Cos I don't know nothink of Paris," returned that faithful domestic; "and I heerd say in the servant's room last night that there vos walleys express to conduct visitors to the warious sights, and to speak for 'em ven vanted."

"Very good, Sam," observed Mr. Pickwick, approvingly. "You may as well go and see the master of the hotel about it; and let us have a carriage, if we can, in half-an-hour."

"Plenty o' vehicles to be had, Sir, I des say, in a town like this

'ere;" and with these words Mr. Weller departed to execute his master's orders. In about twenty minutes he returned, bearing the welcome intelligence that a handsome carriage and a *valet-de-place* were in attendance. Mr. Pickwick, followed by his companions, accordingly hastened down stairs, and were speedily ensconced in the vehicle, the *valet* mounting the box and seating himself next to the coachman, and Mr. Weller stationing himself behind the carriage, and dealing a perfect dictionary of signals and nods to the idlers in the court-yard of Meurice's hotel.

The Chamber of Deputies was the first "lion" to which the travel-



lers were conducted; and Mr. Pickwick made many valuable observations in praise of the arrangements he witnessed in the *salle* where the representatives of the first nation in the world were wont to assemble. The semi-circular form of the house, which is about 125 feet in width and 58 in depth, having five rows of seats for the deputies, the place occupied by the president, and the position of the tribune whence the orator addresses the deputies, all called forth the warmest acclamations of one so eminently calculated to pass an opinion in such matters.

The Palace of Luxembourg was the second edifice visited by Mr. Pickwick and his companions on this memorable day; and the Chamber of Peers afforded the hero of these memoirs another opportunity of making some of those remarks which for correctness and perspicuity are unrivalled in the lives of great men. The party was, moreover, considerably amused by the behaviour of Mr. Weller, who ascended to the eminent seat usually filled by Baron Pasquier, the president of the Upper House, and there performed such wonderful antics, that if he had not been taken for the president himself, he could only be recognised as Samuel Weller, son and heir to Tony of the same name. Having inspected the magnificent church of St. Sulpice, the travellers then repaired to the Pantheon.

"What an elegant building!" exclaimed Mr Pickwick in raptures, as he stood in the middle of the Temple dedicated to the memory of heroes, and gazed upwards to admire the vast dome above him.

"It only requires some fine statues to render it perfect," ob-

served the *valet-de place* in excellent English. But all the best specimens of those great masters—Jean de Juni and Gillis van der Riviere, or Egidio Fiamingo, as the latter is usually called—suffered in those times when the world was so addicted to Iconoclasm!" *

"And a wery nice vord it is," observed Mr. Weller. "Easily pro-nounced, and not at all difficult to spell, I should rayther think."

"A very pretty little amusement, I dare say," said Mr. Pickwick: "but pray is it out of repute now?"

"What, Sir?" enquired the *valet-de-place*.

"The game you alluded to just now," explained Mr. Pickwick, casting a glance of appeal at Mr. Tupman, who had turned away his head and pretended to examine the French inscription to the memory of the heroes of July.

"*Je n'y comprends rien!*" cried the *valet* with a shrug of his shoulders, and a lamentable distortion of his countenance, which appeared to be occasioned by the pity he experienced for those who did not understand a term he had invariably made use of, every time he was happy enough to conduct strangers to the Pantheon, during the last ten years of his life.

The Garden of Plants—Notre-Dame—and the Morgue were then severally inspected in their turns by our persevering travellers; and on every occasion did the *valet* seek an opportunity of displaying his erudition to advantage. But we will not fatigue our readers by an elaborate account of "the lions" of Paris. Suffice it to say, that it was five o'clock in the evening when Mr. Pickwick and his companions returned to Meurice's hotel; and as they had signified their intention of dining at the *table-d' hote*, they were only just in time to wash and dress themselves in order to appear decently at the gastronomical ordeal through which they were to pass.

The signal-bell rang at the usual hour—half-past five—and Mr. Pickwick, followed by Mr. Tupman, Mr. Boozie, Mr. Crashem, and Mr. Winkle, proceeded to the spacious apartment, where a table was spread for upwards of sixty people.

"Admirable display!" observed Mr. Pickwick, as he entered the room, rubbing his hands with delight.

"Not half so fine as my father's at Crashem Park," observed the heir apparent to the said territory.

"Ah! Sugden, my boy!" exclaimed a young gentleman, stepping forward from amidst a group of Englishmen with whom he had been conversing: "what the devil brought you here? Why—I thought you were travelling for the great haberdashers in the City, still! What were their names—though? Oh! I recollect—Bodkin and Grogram—to be sure!—But what *did* bring you here?"—and the stranger clasped Mr. Adolphus Crashem's hand with unfeigned delight.

"My dear Sir—really—now—" stammered that gentleman, his countenance changing from pink to white, and white to pink alternately.

"What! don't you recollect your old friend Tims?" exclaimed

* Image-breaking.

the stranger, eyeing the discomfited Mr. Crashem with a look of astonishment. "Lord—I knew *you* though, the moment you came into the room: and I'm deuced glad to see you too, into the bargain—for a better fellow as a commercial traveller in the haberdasher line, I will say I never knew. But, by the bye—does your father still keep the *Lanthorn and Cat* in the Borough, or has the old chap made his fortune?"

"'Pon my word, my dear Sir," cried Mr. Crashem, "you really have the—the advantage of me. I am not aware—"

"Now, now, Sugden, my dear fellow," interrupted Mr. Tims, still retaining his alleged friend by the hand and the button-hole, "don't be oblivious, as the swell chaps say. Wern't you and I brought up together at the cheap school in Yorkshire? and didn't we both go as 'prentices at the same time—you to Bodkin and Grogram, and I to Gingham and Muddle? and, then, wasn't it in the same year that we set up as travellers?—By the bye, have you seen Muggins? he's in Paris—but he wouldn't do the thing genteel like you and me, and so he's lodging at an English chop-house in the Roo something—I forget which."

Mr. Pickwick had stood a silent spectator of this extraordinary scene, while Mr. Winkle expected every moment that Mr. Adolphus Crashem would fell to the ground the saucy stranger, who dared treat an aristocrat as a haberdasher's traveller, and the heir to Crashem Park as the prospective successor to the *Lanthorn and Cat*. But as Mr. Winkle was disappointed in his expectations, and as Mr. Pickwick had so far recovered from his astonishment as to be able to interfere in his new friend's behalf, both those gentlemen attacked Mr. Tims at the same time—with words, only, gentle reader—and endeavoured to make him believe that he was labouring under a mistake. But this was not a very easy task to perform; for Mr. Tims was convinced that the individual in question was no other than Bill Sugden, the traveller, and son of old Jack Sugden, landlord of the quiet and respectable "public" known in the Borough as the *Lanthorn and Cat*.

"I see where the mistake is," cried Mr. Crashem, recalling his bewildered ideas, and gradually recovering his presence of mind. "Allow me to explain the affair in private;"—and this much injured individual led Mr. Tims aside, and a hasty conversation in whispers immediately ensued between them, the result of which was that Mr. Tims assured Mr. Pickwick he had laboured under an error, and that there was not the slightest identity existing as to Mr. Sugden and Mr. Crashem. The whole party accordingly seated themselves together at one end of the table; and Mr. Crashem, in a true and amiable Christian spirit of forgiveness, treated Mr. Tims with the utmost cordiality and respect during the meal. Mr. Pickwick, however, looked suspicious; but the champagne was circulated so freely that even he relapsed into his usual openness and generosity of disposition, and shook hands three times with Mr. Tims and Mr Crashem, ere the sixth bottle of Moett's best had been well discussed.

CHAPTER IX.

AN ELEGANT PANTOMIME, VULGARLY CALLED "A FARCE," GOT UP AND ENACTED BY MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM AND MR. TIMS.—A PARTY OF GENTLEMEN OBLIGINGLY SUPPLY MR. CRASHEM WITH LODGINGS GRATIS.

WHILE the younger members of the party were engaged, as we left them at the end of the preceding chapter, in mirthful conversation, the following dialogue took place between Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Boozie.

"How do you like your quarters?" enquired the former gentleman in the true spirit of philanthropic curiosity. "Have you a comfortable bed-room—and can you manage to sleep in a French bed?"

"Why—to tell you the truth," responded Mr. Boozie, "my bed-room is as comfortable as one could expect in a house like this. No—it isn't, though," exclaimed Mr. Boozie after a momentary pause,—"I'm telling a confounded fib, when I think of it—'tisn't at all comfortable. It looks on the front—and the carriages make such a clattering, I only got ten—no, I didn't, though—I only managed to get two short naps all night."

"How very provoking!" cried the good-natured Mr. Pickwick, swallowing a bumper of claret. "And I can sleep anywhere almost—in the midst of disturbances of every kind—'tis all the same to me!"

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Boozie. "I once knew a man in the West Indies—no, it wasn't, though—I'm again telling a falsehood—'twas in the East Indies, when I recollect—who slept while a whole regiment of English—of Native Infantry, I mean—walked over his body. But which is your room?"

"The one behind your's," answered Mr. Pickwick, who found it much more facile to swallow Meurice's claret than Mr. Boozie's tales: "it looks upon the court-yard of the hotel."

"How I envy you!" ejaculated Mr. Boozie.

"I should be most happy to change," observed Mr. Pickwick, emptying his glass, and summoning the waiter for another bottle, to the astonishment of Mr. Tupman, who already saw double, and the horror of Mr. Winkle, who felt a great inclination to deposit himself quietly under the table.

"Really, you are too good," modestly remarked Mr. Boozie: "but if it were not asking too much—"

"Oh! not at all," interrupted Mr. Pickwick. "Say no more upon the subject: I will give orders to Sam, presently, to change our respective trunks, and only hope you will slumber well to-night in your new quarters."

This matter being settled to the mutual satisfaction of the two parties principally interested in the arrangement, the bottle of wine, that had been ordered, was duly dispatched, and the conversation became as general as the exceedingly edifying remarks of Mr. Tupman and the

incomprehensible articulations of Mr. Winkle would allow it to be. Mr. Crashem was amazingly talkative, and Mr. Tims endeavoured to persuade his new acquaintances to accompany him to an English tavern, where he would introduce them to a society of gentlemen, principally in the lace-weaving line, called "The Odd Fellows," and would propose Mr. Pickwick as Chairman for the evening. But this handsome and flattering invitation was gratefully declined by Mr. Pickwick, who, in the name of himself and followers, pleaded fatigue as an excuse. The party accordingly broke up at an early hour; Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Boozie, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle retiring to their respective couches, while Mr. Crashem and Mr. Tims adjourned to the coffee-room to drink brandy-and-water, discuss cigars, and converse on matters the subject of which we shall not intrude upon the reader.

Now it happened that Messieurs Crashem and Tims drank a very considerable quantity of Cognac, smoked a plurality of indifferent havannahs, and seemed to enter upon so excellent an understanding with each other, that, about midnight, when both were rather unsteady upon their pins, they mutually swore they would not retire to bed without having a "lark." They accordingly debated in their own minds what species of "lark" should be adopted as the crowning incident of the evening: and after a variety of propositions and objections, it was unanimously resolved to "toe old Boozie"—an agreeable and innocent amusement, consisting of the simple process of entering clandestinely into a man's bed-room, tying a string round his great toe, and then pulling the said string with about the same force that one uses in ringing a front-door bell.

"Do you know his room, Sug—Crashem, I mean?" enquired Mr. Tims, tossing off the remnant of his brandy-and-water.

"Certainly," responded the gentleman thus interrogated. "Come along—he's sound a-sleep by this time—what a lark we'll have!"

"Won't we?" echoed Mr. Tims; and with these indications of their extreme satisfaction, they ascended the stair-case together, provided themselves with a long piece of whip-cord in Mr. Crashem's chamber, and then proceeded on tip-toe to the front-room where Mr. Boozie was supposed to be sleeping. The door was not locked—they accordingly entered with stealthy steps—and Mr. Tims succeeded in affixing one end of the string to one of the toes of the individual who occupied the bed, without awakening the intended victim. They then quietly retreated from the apartment, and closed the door with the utmost precaution, while the cord, which passed underneath, was safely retained in the grasp of the facetious Mr. Tims.

"Now for it," whispered Mr Crashem; and Mr. Tims gave an energetic pull at the string, which effectually aroused the individual to whose foot it was attached; so much so, that violent cries issued from the room, and threatened to alarm the whole hotel. Messieurs Crashem and Tims precipitated themselves into the chamber occupied by the former gentleman; and Mr. Tupman, aroused by the noise, leapt from his bed, and rushed into the passage, crying "Fire!" with all his might. Mr. Winkle awoke in his turn, and ran out of his room, requesting to be informed what was the matter; when his foot caught in a noose, and he fell gracefully and airily on his nose, while the screams and shrieks from the front bed-room redoubled.

"Heavens! what is the matter, gentlemen?" exclaimed Mr. Adolphus Crashem, suddenly issuing from his apartment, with a countenance expressive of the most signal alarm, just as Mr. Boozie emanated from the very chamber of which the cause of this disturbance had fondly deemed Mr. Pickwick to be the proprietor.

"Treason! robbers! thieves!" shouted Mr. Winkle, in vain endeavouring to disengage himself from the mysterious cord that had entangled itself round his legs.

At this crisis the door of the front bed-chamber was thrown hastily open, and Mr. Pickwick limped forth, uttering most piteous sounds of complaint. To the immortal honour of Mr. Crashem be it noted, that, even to the prejudice of his own "lark," did he immediately rush forward, trip Mr. Pickwick lightly up in the passage, and cut the cord which surrounded the dexter great toe of that illustrious man. By some strange coincidence, as Mr. Tupman has since declared, Mr. Tims suddenly appeared amongst the confused group, and Mr. Winkle was raised on his legs in the twinkling of an eye.

"Very extraordinary conduct, this!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick in the deepest indignation.

"Infamous!" shouted Mr. Adolphus Crashem. "If this be the way in which the French treat true-born Englishmen, we'll soon show them what we are;"—and he immediately assumed a pugilistic attitude, to the great dismay of Mr. Winkle, who retreated quietly to his bedroom.

"Let's give them a deuced good licking, Sug—Crashem, I mean," cried Mr. Tims, elevating his fists in imitation of his companion; whereupon Mr. Tupman declared he would come back and help them; but he probably forgot to tender his pledged assistance, as he also returned to his apartment, and buried himself underneath the bedclothes for the remainder of the night.

"Very singular!" again ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, who was standing in a musing attitude, which was rendered the more interesting and remarkable from the circumstance of his being in his night-shirt.

"I once knew a man," said Mr. Boozie—"no, it wasn't—she was a woman—"

"Never mind, Sir, what you recollect, or what you knew," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, sternly interrupting the discomfited Mr. Boozie; "but pray let us see, Sir, if you can point out the authors of this most indecent outrage—an outrage, Sir—"

"Not I!" murmured Mr. Boozie; and with these words he imitated the prudential example of Messieurs Tupman and Winkle, and slunk back to his apartment, just as M. Cailliez and a host of waiters made their appearance in the passage. The disturbance now became general. The master of the hotel accused his tenants of creating an unseemly and ungentlemanly noise, to the disrepute and ruin of the respectability of the house. Mr. Pickwick in vain endeavoured to narrate the injuries he had sustained; Mr. Tims called for the Police; and Mr. Crashem kindly offered to fight any half-dozen Frenchmen who chose to step forward. At this crisis a new and not unimportant actor arrived upon the stage, in the shape and guise of Mr. Samuel Weller, who, like the rest, had been disturbed by the noise which issued from the apartments occupied by his revered master and that master's friends.

Mr. Pickwick was endeavouring to explain the nature of the insult he had received, just at the moment when Mr. Weller made his appearance in his breeches and striped waistcoat; and a vague notion of some received wrong was thus conveyed to the mind of that faithful domestic, to whom it did not for one moment occur that any-body but Frenchmen could have been the authors of the offence. Without listening to the merits or particulars of the case, Mr. Weller immediately communicated a violent *impetus*, in the shape of a hard blow, to the body of M. Cailliez; and while that gentleman was in the act of falling over a few of his dependants, Mr. Crashem violently rushed forward, and followed up the advantage already gained by Mr. Weller, by kicking Madame Meurice's deputy playfully down the first flight of stairs, while Mr. Tims discharged at the heads of the astonished waiters all the boots and shoes that were arranged at the several bedroom doors in the passage. The premises were thus immediately cleared of the enemy; and after a few comments upon the strange occurrences of the evening, Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Crashem, Mr. Tims, and Mr. Weller retired each once more to his respective apartment.

The meeting at the breakfast-table on the following morning was gloomy and uncomfortable. Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle secretly reproached themselves for having left their venerated leader in the hour of danger, despite of the stimulating but unprophetic lines indited by Mr. Snodgrass, and laid before the reader in a former chapter: Mr. Boozie felt annoyed at Mr. Pickwick's manner and abruptness on the occasion of the disturbance; Mr. Crashem affected sympathy and commiseration; Mr. Tims laughed in the sleeve of his blue coat with brass buttons—and Mr. Pickwick himself was unusually thoughtful and low-spirited. Conjecture, on all sides, in vain endeavoured to affix the authorship of the insult on the devoted head of some audacious culprit; but not a breath of suspicion sullied the fair fame of Messieurs Tims and Crashem.

"I wish I had been there when the fighting began," exclaimed Mr. Winkle, assuming a menacing air, and clenching his fist with the determined countenance of a gladiator.

"Didn't I give it to that fellow Cailliez?" enquired Mr. Crashem, blandly appealing to Mr. Tims, who nodded his head in a peculiar manner expressive of assent.

"Pity I missed it!" observed Mr. Tupman; "for I should have liked to have pitched into some of those French dogs," he added, with a courageous glance at Mr. Boozie.

"Boozie," said Mr. Pickwick, brightening up, when those loyal sentiments met his ear; "I was somewhat harsh last night—but you should make allowances for the excruciating agony I endured in my great toe." Here Messieurs Crashem and Tims with difficulty suppressed a laugh.—"But, there's my hand, Boozie," continued the noble-minded and generous Mr. Pickwick.

Mr. Boozie grasped the out-stretched hand that was so liberally offered, and a pathetic little piece of tragedy ensued. Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle thought it right to shed tears; Mr. Crashem pinched Mr. Tims on the thigh—and Mr. Tims returned the compliment on Mr. Crashem's ribs; and all were looking very doleful and very much affected, when the door was thrown open, and M. Calliez, attended by his two clerks, entered the room.

"What is the matter, now?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, rising from his chair, and putting his hands under his coat-tails, to give a more determined air to his already imposing attitude.

"Sir," said M. Cailliez, very civilly, "I shall say nothing about the ill-treatment I received at the hands of your domestic and friends last evening—"

"You'd better not," interrupted Mr. Winkle, from the opposite side of the table, and glancing round to see if there were not a poker or shovel in his immediate vicinity.

"But," continued M. Cailliez, without deigning to notice this interruption, "I must request, in every possible term of respect, that you suit yourselves with other apartments as speedily as possible."

"Bring the bill!" ejaculated Mr. Crashem; "and as for staying any longer in your confounded hotel, strike me stupid if I would not sooner be—"

"There are two or three gentlemen desirous of speaking to *you*, Sir, down stairs," quietly interrupted M. Cailliez, addressing himself with a bow to Mr. Adolphus Crashem, who turned pale, hesitated, and held his peace.

"If any one wish to see Mr. Crashem," said Mr. Pickwick, "let him walk up; and in the course of the morning send me your account. You have only anticipated me in my intentions. Show Mr. Crashem's friends up immediately;"—and extricating his right hand from beneath his coat-tails, Mr. Pickwick waved it impressively in the air—a signal M. Cailliez, with all the native politeness of a Frenchman, immediately obeyed, retreating from the room, followed by his two clerks, whom he had brought with him, as meet aid, in case of a renewed attack.

"I wonder who it can be," observed Mr. Crashem, somewhat uneasily, when the door had closed behind M. Cailliez and his myrmidons.

"I do not think they could have the impudence to send a gendarme to take you up," said Mr. Pickwick, recalling to mind the adventure of Mr. Weller, at the theatre in Calais.

"Oh! Arabella! Arabella!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle in a fit of most unfeigned agony, as he sank into a chair, and proceeded to bury his face in his hands. "But you will be good to her, Pickwick—Tupman—if I should fall;—you won't desert her! And if I die—in—in— a land —of—strangers—"

Here Mr. Winkle's voice was lost in sobs; and at the moment when Mr. Pickwick was about to approach his disconsolate friend, the door again opened, and a quiet procession of four gentlemen, dressed in a variety of garbs, marched into the room.

The first was a stout personage, attired in the extreme of fashion, and decorated with the order of the Legion of Honour. The second was a short, sallow-visaged, sharp-eyed, straight-haired, thin-looking individual, holding a parcel of papers in his hand, and glancing around him with keenness and suspicion. The third and fourth members of this little procession were two seedy-dressed, coarse-visaged, tobacco-smelling vagabonds, with thread-bare coats, boots airily contrived to admit the fresh breezes at the toes, and shirts as dirty as if they had been part of a reversionary interest in the property of a deceased coal-heaver.

"*Parlez-vous Français, Messieurs?*" enquired the thin gentleman.

A pause ensued; and as no reply was given either by the wondering Mr. Pickwick, or his equally astounded companions, the individual who put the above query, made a sign to one of the shabby-dressed gentlemen; and the said shabby-dressed gentleman immediately disappeared. He returned in a few minutes, accompanied by one of the waiters of the hotel, as an interpreter. This re-enforcement having been obtained, the following conversation ensued through the *medium* of the waiter.

"Is Mr. Adolphus Crashem present?"

"I am the gentleman who bears that name. What the devil do you want with me?"

"Are you prepared to pay twelve hundred francs, in one instance—three thousand four hundred in another—and two thousand in a third? the first being a debt contracted by you to a livery-stable keeper in Bond Street, London; the second to a tailor in Regent Street, of the same city; and the third to a jeweller in Calais. Here are three bills of exchange, regularly drawn and endorsed, and now in the hands of Messieurs Romanée and Médoc, wine-merchants in Paris, The amount of the whole is six thousand six hundred francs."*

"Pay! who the devil talks of paying?" cried Mr. Adolphus Crasham. "No gentleman ever yet paid a bill at maturity; and if he had he would have been caught, ticketed, and put into a museum as a curiosity."

"Then, Sir," proceeded the waiter, "this gentleman"—pointing to him with the riband of the Legion of Honour—"is the Justice of the Peace, attending as a magistrate to see that no force be illegally used on either side; that gentleman—" indicating the one with the papers—"is a bailiff, duly authorized by the Judge of the Tribunal of First Instance to arrest your person;—and those men—" waving his hand in the direction of the two individuals in the dirty shirts—"are the witnesses of the caption, required by law in these cases."

"The devil they are!" cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem; "and as such is their game, if my friends Tims, Tupman, and Winkle, will only assist me, we'll devilish soon rid the room of such unpleasant company."

"I'm ready, for one!" exclaimed Mr. Tims: "so fall to as soon as you like."

"Tupman—Winkle," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, sternly, "do not attempt to interfere with these gentlemen in the discharge of their duty. We know not the laws of this country, and must not stand the chance of violating any of them."

"Well—I certainly won't, if you wish it," observed Mr. Tupman, from whose mind nothing had been farther absent than the idea of fighting in behalf of Mr. Crashem; "and I'm convinced Winkle will not disobey you."

"No—that I won't," exclaimed Mr. Winkle, recovering for the first time from the state of extreme misery into which he had just now been plunged. "Not but that I would have done my best, though, if Pickwick were agreeable."

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* Two hundred and sixty-four pounds sterling.

"What is to be done, then?" enquired Mr. Crashem, casting a suppliant look at the Pickwickians—or rather at their pockets.

"You had better go to prison at once," said Mr. Pickwick, in a voice tremulous with emotion; "and then we can try and make arrangements with your creditors."

Mr. Crashem expressed his gratitude for the advice, but begged to observe that he strongly suspected "there was a hook at the end of it." Mr. Pickwick acknowledged the compliment, although he did not exactly understand nor appreciate its full value.

"Yes," continued Mr. Pickwick, after a pause; "that will be the better plan; and in a week or two, I have no doubt but that we shall be able to come to a settlement."

"Will you undertake it yourself, old boy?" enquired Mr. Crashem, hastily.

"Forthwith," answered Mr. Pickwick, in a decided manner.

"Then here goes for *quod*," cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem; and he desired the waiter to inform the *huissier* that he was ready to accompany him. The Justice of the Peace then made a polite bow, and withdrew; and the bailiff ordered his witnesses to hasten to Saint Pelagie —or the New Prison, rather—and wait for him and his prisoner in the lobby.

"Had we not better accompany our friend," demanded Mr. Winkle, "just to see him as far as his new quarters?"

"Decidedly," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, ringing the bell, and summoning Mr. Weller to order a hackney-coach—a commission that was immediately executed; so that the whole party, accompanied by the *huissier*, took immediate possession, outside and inside of the vehicle, and amidst the hootings, shouts, and cries of amazement of the various hangers-on to Meurice's hotel, proceeded towards the Rue de Clichy, with as much hilarity and glee as if their destination were a bridal or christening.

In process of time, the *fiacre* stopped at No. 68, opposite a low gate-way, in a white free-stone wall, over which might be discerned a meagre quantity of trees, and a very high white building in the rear. The bailiff was the first to descend from the vehicle, and Mr. Pickwick paid the fare, while his companions issued from its recesses, or leapt from the top. They then all proceeded in a body to the iron-barred gate of the prison, across an extensive court, the gates of which were guarded by sentinels, posted at certain intervals. A word from the bailiff, whispered in the ear of the turnkey, speedily caused that functionary to unlock the immense *grille*, and the party was admitted into the lobby, and thence conducted to an extensive apartment adjoining, called the waiting-room, from the window of which was a pleasant and agreeable view of the principal portion of the Debtors' Prison of Paris.

The gaol is built in a quadrangular form, the space circumscribed by its four sides being neatly laid out in a garden and gravelled walks, for the use of the prisoners. There is nothing of that miserable, gloomy, and Newgate-like appearance which so especially characterizes the Farringdon Hotel, and the Royal Repose in London, about this tenement for the reception of gentlemen whose liabilities have exceeded their means. On the contrary, the New Saint Pelagie of Paris is

merely a prison in fact, without being one in aspect. This is, however, but meagre consolation for its inmates, and may probably be deemed an over-nice distinction.

Mr. Pickwick, having taken notes of the names of Mr. Crashem's creditors, and the particulars of the debts, promised to write to London that very day, at the same time hinting the necessity of paying the Calais tradesman in full, as it would be almost useless to expect to compromise with an utter stranger. Mr. Adolphus Crashem expressed his gratitude in due terms, and, to evince it the more effectually, gave Mr. Pickwick so violent a slap on the back, that the tears came into his eyes, and dimmed the visual organs of that philanthropic man. Mr. Tims intimated his intention of staying with his particular friend, Mr. Crashem, for the remainder of the day, "just to see him snug and comfortably settled," as he tastefully expressed himself; upon which Mr. Pickwick, followed by Mr. Boozie, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Weller, took his leave for the moment, and returned to Meurice's hotel, to settle his account, and remove to other quarters.

CHAPTER X.

MR. SAMUEL WELLER IS NOMINATED AMBASSADOR-PLENIPOTENTIARY BETWEEN MR. PICKWICK AND M. CAILLIEZ.—MR. TUPMAN AND MR. BOOZIE VISIT THE PALAIS ROYAL.—LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.—A BREACH BETWEEN TWO GREAT MEN.

"SAM," said Mr. Pickwick, when they were once more arrived at the hotel, "tell the landlord I wish to speak to him immediately."

"Wery good, Sir," returned that gentleman; "but I rayther think he's en-gaged for the moment, Sir, as the lawyer's clerk said to the poor client."

"What makes you think so, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Cos I see him lookin' at two dancin' bears, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, "just as we drove into the yard o' the hot-tel, Sir?"

"In the street, Sam?" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, starting as if a mouse had suddenly galloped up his leg.

"No vere else, Sir," replied Mr. Weller, dogmatically; "an' to-morrow night—vich is Sunday, Sir—he an' all his family and friends — seventeen on 'em—is a-goin' to the theayter, I heerd say."

"The theatre on a Sunday?" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, starting up from his chair in an excess of the most virtuous indignation:—"I shall protest against it, Sam!—Winkle—I shall protest against it!—No—Tupman—do not attempt to dissuade me from my purpose—I repeat my words, I shall protest against it! The eyes of our countrymen are upon us—our actions are watched—Snodgrass himself is ready to relate them to the world—and, as a true philanthropist, I shall protest against it!"

Here Mr. Pickwick, fatigued by the ardour with which he had spoken, sank into his chair, and rang the bell violently.

Waiter!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, when that functionary made his appearance. "Waiter," added the great man, turning himself round in his chair, and vainly endeavouring to compose those feelings that were labouring under a strange state of excitement.

"Bring me a glass of soda-water, waiter," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "And—waiter!—Let there be a dash of brandy in it—do you hear?"

The waiter bowed obedience, and disappeared.

"Thank God it is nothing else!" said Mr. Winkle, to Mr. Tupman.

"The bears is gone, Sir," said Mr. Weller, returning from the window, whence he had been gazing into the street; "and I think they're a-goin' to the king's pallis in the Tooleries, to amuse the royal childer. Shall I tell Mosseer Cally to valk up now, Sir?"

Mr. Pickwick nodded assent, and Sam departed to execute his commission, muttering as he descended the stairs, "Vell! here *is* a rig! I'm blowed if the gov'nor don't get e-wangelical as he grows older. Ven vill he be vide avake?"

By the time Mr. Weller had made these reflections, he arrived at the office in which M. Cailliez usually sate to receive the cash of those of his customers who could pay their bills, and the excuses of those who could not.

"Mas'er vants you di-rectly, Sir," said Mr. Weller to Madame Meurice's deputy.

"My compliments to your master, young man," returned M. Cailliez, "and I am very sorry he should have been put to any annoyance last night or this morning, in my hotel. Now that his friend, whom I shrewdly suspect to have been at the bottom of all the mischief, is removed to the *Hotel d'Angleterre*—" (as the debtors' prison in Paris is facetiously and not improperly denominated)—"I hope your master will honour me by staying as long as he likes; and every apology he may require for any rudeness on my part, I am willing to tender.

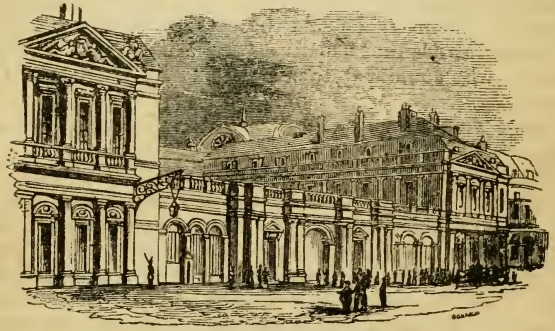
"An' wery creditable to you to say so, too," remarked Mr. Weller. "I'll try and recollect your insinivating message, an' ain't got no doubt but that it vill be found say-tisfactory, as the serwant said to the lady ven she swore she vouldn't go back to her husband."

Mr. Weller accordingly returned to his master, who had just imbibed the soda-water and brandy. The apology was duly delivered, and, on the suggestion of Mr. Tupman, with the consent of Mr. Winkle, and the expressed indifference of Mr. Boozie, it was resolved that the quarters should not be shifted, provided M. Cailliez would enter into his own recognizances to guarantee Mr. Pickwick from another "toeing." Matters were thus amicably settled; and a light luncheon, consisting of two removes of hot meats and three bottles of claret, was immediately discussed for the benefit of the eaters as well as of the purveyors of the luxurious food. Mr. Pickwick then wrote a letter to "Anthony Stickemin, tailor, Regent Street, London"—and another to "Michael Nagsflesh, livery-stable-keeper, Bond Street"—in which he proposed certain arrangements for the purpose of extricating Mr. Crashem from his difficulties, and restoring so invaluable a friend to the circle of his acquaintances. These epistles were duly sealed and despatched to the post-office; and Mr. Pickwick intimated to Mr. Winkle that he was ready to accompany him to the residence of the English merchants with whom the said Mr. Winkle was desirous

of establishing a correspondence and agency for his father's commercial business.

But as no extraordinary degree of interest is attached to these arrangements, we shall now leave Messieurs Pickwick and Winkle, and follow Messieurs Tupman and Boozie in an agreeable perambulation, which they manfully and fearlessly accomplished together—alone and unattended—in the Dædalian mazes of Paris.

Wandering forth at hazard from the portal of Meurice's hotel, arm-in-arm, and feeling that they were Englishmen upon French ground—and a most satisfactory feeling it must be, too—Mr. Tupman and Mr. Boozie passed up the Rue de Rivoli, grinning in at shop-windows, ogling the girls, and maintaining their heads erect, with a most blissful recklessness of whither they were going, and whom they were taken for. By dint of extraordinary navigation, they speedily arrived at the Palais Royal; and a species of instinct prompted them to enter



that vast assemblage of splendour and of wealth—that mart in the vicinity of a palace—that palace overlooking shops—that *unique* lounge which has no rival in the world!

"What an extraordinary place!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, half afraid that he had entered upon holy ground.

"Singular!" echoed Mr. Boozie. "But I was once—no, I wasn't, though—what a lie I am telling—"

"I thought you had been in Paris before," remonstrated Mr. Tupman with his usual native mildness.

"Never farther from the frontiers than Abbeville," replied Mr. Boozie, with an uneasy motion of his arm. "I think I told you that I had been here before—but 'twas false—I made a mistake—I meant Brussels, when I said Paris."

"Fine girl, that," cried Mr. Tupman, indicating with his dexter hand a young female who had just passed, and was a few yards in front of them. "Devilish fine girl, to be sure!"

"Is she, though?" exclaimed Mr. Boozie, squinting most horribly at a brace of pheasants displayed in the windows of Chevol's shop, the gastronomic vicinity of which our two peregrinators were now in. "She is, indeed," rejoined Mr. Tupman, with a sigh: "let us follow her."

"I once knew a young lady," said Mr. Boozie, redoubling his pace to keep military time with Mr. Tupman, who had assumed a young,

jaunty, and *debonnaire* air, swinging himself from side to side, and playing with the single curl that hung beneath the front of his hat,—"I once knew a lady—"

"Devil take *your* lady," interrupted Mr. Tupman, somewhat hastily: "don't you see I'm losing *mine*?"—and with these words, the two gentlemen redoubled their pace.

It is impossible to ascertain whether the young lady looked round by accident, or whether she had a motive in scanning the persons of the two individuals that followed her so closely. One thing is, however, certain, that she *did* turn her head round for a moment, and in so doing discovered the most beautiful features Mr. Tupman's eyes had ever yet glanced upon. He stopped short, as if transfixed by the sudden stroke of an arrow; involuntarily placed his hand upon his heart, and was about to sink on one knee, when Mr. Boozie gave him a most unsentimental tap on his back, and thus recalled his presence of mind, which had nearly been lost in the first whirlwind of ardent passion.

"Lovely creature!" cried Mr. Tupman. "Let us see where she lives;"—and the two gentlemen hastened their pace accordingly, the amatory Mr. Tupman swinging himself from side to side in a manner that would have been perfectly *unique* and interesting if it had not appeared most especially ludicrous and laughable.

"Thank God! she's dropped her handkerchief!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, as the volatile cambric met his anxious eyes; and almost at the same instant the young lady, perceiving her loss, turned hastily round to pick it up. But a gentle zephyr sprung up at the moment, and wafted the handkerchief on its wings across the Garden of the Palais Royal. Mr. Tupman did not hesitate—how could he?—what course to pursue: he resigned his jaunty swing for the urgent nature of the occasion, and relapsing into a more vulgar attitude, took to his heels as fast as his fat person would allow him, and scoured after the fugitive cambric with all the agility and airiness of limb usually discovered in the movements of an old elephant. It is but fair to add that he was not a little encouraged by the smiles—which very much verged into boisterous laughter—of the young lady, and by the peculiarly stimulating and exciting shouts of Mr. Boozie, who cried, "Cut away, Mike! more pudding in the pot!" in a tone and with a manner exactly suited to the gentility of the ejaculation.

Having overturned a nurse and two small children, who were taking an airing in the garden, and knocked down an old gentleman very busily employed in perusing a murder in the *Constitutionel* newspaper—having fallen and picked himself up three times in a fashion exceedingly novel and amusing, and having expelled, by over-exertion, every particle of breath he was proprietor of for the moment, Mr. Tracy Tupman, whose ardour in the cause of love was only equalled by his perseverance at the dinner-table, succeeded in overtaking and arresting the fugitive handkerchief, after a pleasant and healthy run of about three hundred and fifty yards, the sameness of which had been agreeably diversified by a number of tacks and turnings caused by the eccentric movements of the malicious cambric in question.

With the perspiration standing on his expressive countenance, as if he had just been anointed with the oil of gladness, or ducked in a re-

freshing horse-pond; his lips wreathed into smiles, and his chest panting in a manner essentially calculated to aid him in the passionate and glowing speech he intended to make to the young lady, who anxiously waited his return, did Mr. Tupman slowly retrace his steps, bearing the evidence of a glorious triumph in his hand.

"Madam," said he, approaching the young lady with downcast eyes, and laying his hand upon his heart, "deign to pardon—ah! ha—I'm so out of breath—the liberty which I ventured to take—" and here Mr. Tupman was seized with so violent a fit of coughing that he found it quite impossible to achieve that which he had so admirably commenced. The young lady, however, came to his assistance.

"Tank you, sare," said she with the most amiable smile and in the most interesting broken English in the world; "me vary much your debtor—me tank you tousand times, sare—me tell mamma of one polite Inglis *gentilhomme*."

Mr. Tupman could only bow; his feelings and his cough overpowered him. The young lady then proceeded.

"But me fraid you no do good yourself, running in dat hurry, sare; me hop you not ill, sare, on my account;"—and the young lady's tone became exceedingly tremulous.

"Thank you, madam—ugh! ugh! ugh!" began the gallant Mr. Tracy Tupman: "no toil—ugh! ugh! ugh!—is too much—ugh! ugh! ugh!—when the eyes of beauty witness your exertions—ugh! ugh!"—and Mr. Tupman's cough rendered the scene more sentimental still, and gave his speech an additional air of politeness, which the young lady could not but have appreciated; for instead of bowing and pursuing her walk, she lingered to renew her thanks, to assure Mr. Tupman that she should not forget to tell her mamma, the Marchioness, of the polite attention she had received, and that if her brother, the Count, had been at home, she should have taken the liberty of inviting, in his name, the "gallant Inglis *gentilhomme*" to their house in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs close by.

Not a word of all this was lost upon the sensitive Tracy Tupman. His cough grew much better when he found that he was in conversation with the daughter of a Marchioness; it scarcely troubled him when he understood that her brother was a Count; and it entirely left him so soon as an invitation to her residence was even slightly hinted at.

"Could I be permitted the honour of escorting you," said Mr. Tupman with a very low bow, "as far as your house?"

"Me not give so much trouble, Sare," interrupted the young lady, casting down her beautiful eyes.

"Allow me, I beseech you, the honour, madam," persisted Mr. Tupman; and the young lady, suffering her bashfulness to be overruled in this respect, yielded her arm to the polite Englishman, who beckoned Mr. Boozie to follow at a respectful distance.

"Has *Monsieur* long been at Paris?" enquired the charming creature, as she walked up the gallery of the Palais Royal towards the Rue Vivienne, with her gallant *chaperon*.

"Only a few days, madam," returned Mr. Tupman; "but since I have now the honour of being acquainted with—with—"

"*Mademoiselle de Volage* is my name, Sare," said the young lady.

"My fader was one general to Napoleon: he have great many big wound—he die vary rich ten year go—and poor mamma lose near all her fortune in Revolution of July."

Mr. Tupman felt the arm of his fair companion tremble in his; and at the idea of her misfortunes—she, so young, so innocent, so tender, and so beautiful—the perspiration ran copiously down his extensive face, and a deep sigh escaped from his capacious breast to exemplify the sympathy he felt in the unprotected situation of Mademoiselle de Volage. Such disinterested and noble conduct was not lost upon the charming object of his solicitude; for his arm received an almost involuntary pressure—a pressure that gratitude wrests from modesty—from the fingers of the fair girl.

The enactment of this little piece of tragedy occupied the time necessary to emerge from the Palais Royal, and enter the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, in which the dwelling of Madame the Marchioness de Volage was situate. It is true that the house itself had nothing in ts exterior appearance to recommend it, and that the court-yard emitted various unpleasant smells of garlic, onions, stables, &c., at which Mr. Tupman's nose was in great indignation; but the sight of the well-turned ancle and graceful form of the young lady, as she lightly tripped up a narrow stair-case on the right hand side of the *porte cóchere*, recalled Mr. Tupman's mind from mundane ideas to the more delicious dreams of love. He accordingly followed his fair guide as quickly as he could up the stairs, till they arrived at the sixth floor, while Mr. Boozie, with unprecedented complaisance, mounted guard in the street below, wondering at the time "what the devil Tupman was up to," and trying to remember whether such an adventure had ever befallen himself.

In the meantime, Mademoiselle de Volage rang at the bell of a suite of apartments on the sixth floor, and the summons was immediately answered by an old lady of about fifty, tolerably well dressed, and adorned with an immense quantity of chains and artificial flowers —the former round her neck, the latter in her head-dress.

"Ah! my dear mamma," said the young lady, speaking in English for the especial behoof of Mr. Tupman: "what! you answer ring, yourself! Where tho e lazy servants? where Lisette? where Lafleur?"

"Gone for holiday," replied the venerable dame, eyeing the stranger askance. "But, pray, come in—do—Sare."

Mr. Tupman accordingly followed his fair guide and her noble mother across a small ante-chamber, into a drawing-room indifferently furnished. The mantel-piece was covered with an extraordinary quantity of frivolous and faded ornaments—a heap of dingy ribands, half-finished purses, reticules just begun, &c., was congregated upon the table—and a frame for embroidery stood in one corner of the room.

"How beautiful is industry in young persons!" thought Mr. Tupman; and he sighed as he glanced at the lovely features of Mademoiselle de Volage, who was occupied in narrating, in her interesting broken English, to her attentive mother, the kindness of Mr. Tupman relative to the handkerchief, "which she had dropped by one accident." A renewal of thanks then ensued; a conversation, in which the attractions of Paris were elaborately discussed, commenced in its turn; and

Mr. Tupman was already drinking deep draughts from the intoxicating fountain of love, when the respectable Marchioness suddenly recollected "that she had not given out the plate to be cleaned for dinner at seven o'clock," and left the room "only for one moment," as she informed her daughter in a tolerably loud whisper.

Mr. Tupman was now in Elysium itself. He twisted his features into a pleasing variety of contortions, to accomplish as many different sorts of agreeable smiles—he employed all the stars, moons, Venuses, and Cupids that ever were created or imagined, to embellish his discourse—and as his language became the more impassioned, so it grew the less intelligible. He descanted on love at first sight—made a lengthy oration on circumstances often throwing together two beings that were intended for each other from their births—talked an entire folio on the folly of supposing that disparity of ages could be a preventive to happiness—pronounced a lexicon of arguments to demonstrate the fact that men of mature age generally make the best husbands—and concluded with a dictionary of comments on the expediency of prompt determination, and the unmitigated folly of delay in matters so essentially connected with the felicity of a couple of individuals during the term of their natural lives.

Fortunately for Mr. Tupman, the "only one moment" of the Marchioness was a good hour and a half; or else he never would have had time to propound, explain, and demonstrate so many theories and hypotheses as he effectually brought to a most satisfactory conclusion on this eventful day. And, in order to do ample justice to the patience of the French, and adduce another argument in favour of their being deemed the most polite people in the world, we must not omit to state that Mademoiselle de Volage assented to every thing uttered by Mr. Tupman, and listened with evident pleasure to the highly comprehensible and logical positions advanced by that gentleman.

At length Madame la Marquise de Volage *did* return to the room where she had left her daughter to entertain Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Tupman to pay compliments to her daughter, and her daughter and Mr. Tupman to amuse each other to the utmost of their power; and the respectable relict of the late Peer of France expressed her astonishment at the celerity with which time glided away; and then recollected that she had a small party—a *petite soirée* or *réunion*—that evening; and concluded by "provoking" Mr. Tupman to be present, if he had nothing better to do, at half-past nine o'clock. Of course Mr. Tupman had no other engagement; so he gratefully accepted the invitation, and then made his bow—or in other terms, retired, much pleased with the acquaintances he had formed, madly in love with Anastasie de Volage, and not without a shrewd suspicion that he had made some impression upon the young charmer herself. And to the eternal honour of Mr. Tupman be it stated, that, as he descended the five flights of stairs which led from the airy apartments of the Marchioness to the street, it never once struck him whether, in his *tete-à-tete* with the beautiful Anastasie, he had not rendered himself as ridiculous as possible. But great minds disregard trifles like these, and illustrious individuals are frequently the least accessible to the whisperings of that most vulgar, ungenteel, and plebeian sense, very justly and appropriately designated by the title of Common Sense.

Mr. Tupman fortunately found Mr. Boozie still waiting for him in the vicinity of the house in which Madame de Volage rented apartments; and he could not do otherwise than compliment that gentleman on his patience in thus waiting so long for a companion.

"Why," observed Mr. Boozie, "the fact is, that I should never have found the way back to Meurice's hotel by myself: and as I fancied that something extraordinary must be going on up stairs, you know—what a fib I'm telling, when I think of it—I never thought but once—yes, I did, though—I thought twice about you and the young lady. Once I reflected whether she had red hair, or wore a cap—"

"Beautiful black hair!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, his temper somewhat ruffled by this latter observation.

"And, then," continued Mr. Boozie, "I began to reflect whether she could be a kept-mistress or a regular out-and-outer."

"What, Sir!" cried Mr. Tracy Tupman in wrathful indignation. "She is a virtuous girl, Sir—a paragon of beauty, Sir—a phœnix of modesty—a dragon of virtue—a Venus in charms—a Diana in chastity—a—a—Sir—"

"I dare say I was telling an untruth," interrupted Mr. Boozie, his large eyes squinting absolute rounds of beef at Mr. Tracy Tupman, who thought he had never seen any thing more snug nor pleasant than the family circle he had just left.

The two gentlemen, having thus reciprocally intimated the state of their feelings in so highly satisfactory and candid a manner, hastened to Meurice's hotel with as much expedition as their very extensive topographical knowledge of Paris enabled them to adopt; and to their credit be it recorded, that in order to compass a distance of about two hundred and fifty yards, they did not, on this particular occasion, wander more than three quarters of a mile out of the direct line they ought to have pursued.

As the Pickwickians and Mr. Boozie had again determined upon dining at the *table d'hote*, and as Mr. Tupman, like a faithful subordinate, deemed it prudent to acquaint his great leader with all his motions and plans, he was under the necessity of seeking an interview with Mr. Pickwick just before the bell announced the magic hour at which the soup was usually placed upon the table. This opportunity was accordingly sought and effectually gained.

"My dear Pickwick," began Mr. Tupman, with more than a maiden's hesitation, when that interesting creature is about to inform her parent of a first love;—"my dear Pickwick—accident has caused me to discover the most beautiful and faithful of her kind!"

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands with extreme delight. "The female sex, too?"

"What other sex would you have me select?" exclaimed the astonished Mr. Tupman. "Oh! she is so docile," continued the enamoured swain; "you might lead her with a string."

"Does she wear a collar, then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, with a serious expression of countenance.

"Precaution against the unhallowed desires of—"

"Of thieves, to be sure," interrupted Mr. Pickwick, hastily. "I was foolish not to have thought of that."

"Robbers of virtue—beautifully expressed!" cried Mr. Tupman, with a glance of the most profound respect at his great leader.

"What?" said Mr. Pickwick, dubiously.

"Why—the object of my choice," returned Mr. Tupman, fixing a look of extreme stolidity on the hero of these memoirs.

"Take care you are not deceived as to the breed," remonstrated Mr. Pickwick, mildly.

"Impossible!" ejaculated Mr. Tupman. "Her mother is a Marchioness."

"Mr. Tupman!" cried Mr. Pickwick, with some warmth; "are you humbugging me, Sir?"

"God forbid!" murmured Mr. Tupman, greatly affected. "My choice is indubitably fixed. And what do you think I have chosen?"

"A spaniel, I should imagine," returned Mr. Pickwick; "if I may judge by your strings, and your collars, and your docility."

"No, Sir," cried Mr. Tupman, now angry in his turn. "We have misunderstood each other, Sir—you have wilfully misinterpreted my ideas, Sir. The person, and *not* the animal, Sir—to which I allude—is a lady, Sir—do you hear me!"—and Mr. Tupman twisted his fingers in his hair with the precipitation and appearance of extreme wrath.

"And so you have fallen in love again, Sir," shouted Mr. Pickwick, a light breaking in upon him.

"I have, Sir," responded Mr. Tupman; "and what of that?"

"What of that, Sir!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick. "Why, Sir—simply this—that at your time of life—"

"Well, Sir—at my time of life?" sarcastically re-echoed Mr. Tupman.

"You are an ass, Sir," cried Mr. Pickwick—"an old fool, to be humbugged by every idle girl. There, Sir!"

"Pickwick," murmured Mr. Tupman in a voice rendered almost inaudible by deep emotions, "do you recollect the parting between Fox and Burke in the House of Commons?"

"I have heard of it, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, still very irate at the imagined stupidity of his follower. "And what then, Sir?"

"Our parting must be like their's, Pickwick," returned Mr. Tupman: "our friendship is at an end—our intimacy exists no longer;"—and with these words, which he delivered in a tone of the most deplorable and disconsolate misery, Mr. Tupman started from the chair on which he had been seated, glanced sorrowfully at the former companion of his toils and pleasures, sighed deeply, buried his face in his hands, and rushed out of the room in the most approved and interesting state of agony commonly deemed to be in vogue amongst modern tragedians.

"I have been too hasty," said Mr. Pickwick to himself, after the lapse of five minutes. "What is to be done?" enquired that great man of himself. "We will think of it after dinner—I dare say Tupman is not serious!"

And having consoled himself in this truly philosophical and exemplary manner, Mr. Pickwick descended to the *table d'hote* room, where his presence was awaited by Mr. Boozie and Mr. Winkle.

CHAPTER XI.

A FEW COMMENTS ON THE BREACH MENTIONED IN THE LAST CHAPTER.—THE TABLE-D'HOTE AT MEURICE'S HOTEL IN PARIS.—MR. PICKWICK, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. WINKLE AND MR. BOOZIE, VISITS MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM IN HIS NEW QUARTERS.—MR. LIPMAN AND MR. JOPLING.

Mr. Pickwick did not deem it at all necessary to make Mr. Winkle acquainted with the breach that had ere now taken place between himself and Mr. Tupman—that memorable breach which had for its only precedent, in extent of gravity and importance to the world in general, the well-known quarrel between Fox and Burke on the subject of the French Revolution. A commentator might with truth observe, that the coincidence is most singular—four of the greatest men, that ever lived, being thus divided and disaffected on account of French affairs, concerning which there was a trifling difference of opinion. The most glorious revolution that ever was eventually sullied by the misguided minds of tyrants and monsters—and the loveliness of a beautiful French girl, were sufficient, the one to alienate a Burke from a Fox, and the other a Tupman from a Pickwick! As the pen of the faithful historian traces these characters on the undying page which records the deeds of those whose fame will never be extinguished, his hand trembles—a tear steals down his countenance—a sigh escapes his breast—and he feels more than half inclined to moralize on the instability of friendship. But second thoughts, and a sense of the duty he owes mankind in general, induce him to forego such digression for the present, and continue uninterruptedly the thread of his biographical narrative.

"Doesn't Tupman dine with us to-day?" enquired Mr. Winkle, savouring the *soupe à la julienne*, and appealing to Mr. Pickwick.

"I fancy he has an appointment," responded that gentleman, with a suppressed sigh.

"Didn't we get through a lot of business to-day?" continued Mr. Winkle, after a slight pause.

Mr. Pickwick replied in the affirmative, and made some comments on the vastness of the commercial transactions they had opened with two great houses in Paris.

"But what shall we do with ourselves this evening?" interrupted Mr. Boozie, when he had swallowed a very large glass of wine, and poured out another. "I think—no, I don't, though—I only imagine—"

"What?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"That it would be but charitable," answered Mr. Boozie, "if we were to call upon that poor devil Crashem. Sims—no, it ain't—what a confounded fib I was telling!—Tims, I mean, said there would be a devil of a spree going on there this evening."

"Private theatricals, I suppose?" observed Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! no," explained Mr. Boozie, "I told an untruth, if I said that; he only meant drinking, smoking, singing, and all that sort of thing!"

"High-spirited fellows!" cried Mr. Pickwick, his philanthropic countenance beaming with delight. "For my part, I have no objection to join them for an hour or so. What do you say, Winkle?"

"With pleasure," returned that gentleman; "and as they lock up early, it would be as well to go soon."

"Immediately after dinner," said Mr. Pickwick; and as the conversation then languished for a few minutes, he took the opportunity of scrutinizing some of the various characters seated at the *table d'hote*.

Next to Mr. Winkle there was a tall, thin, dissipated-looking young Englishman, with a very pale face, dull eyes, and languid air. He was dressed in a Newmarket kind of style; and, in spite of his evidently debilitated state, there was a certain pretension about his appearance which at once indicated the rake as well as the *roué*. On his right hand was an old fat lady, with a very low gown and a very high turban, a very affected air and a very large appetite, very vulgar manners and a very great but very ineffectual affectation of gentility This personage, as well as two milk-and-water-drinking and bread-and-butter-eating girls, her daughters, were evidently importations from the vicinity of Bow Church, Cheapside, London. Next to the elder of the two young ladies just alluded to, sate a French gentleman of sixty. His linen was the whitest ever seen—his shirt collar the highest ever worn—his coat was without a wrinkle—his three waistcoats without a plait—his two watch-chains tastefully appended to his neck—his wrinkled countenance all smiles—his conversation all compliments—and his attitudes all bows, nods, and shrugs. He spoke English indifferently, but was evidently making the best use of his slight acquaintance with our vernacular, to captivate the heart of the vulgar lady's daughter, who smiled, lisped an occasional monosyllable, and blushed at stated intervals, as she eagerly listened to the welcome nonsense the French gentleman breathed in her ear.

Just beyond the French dandy, was seated an English clergyman, who had a very seedy coat on his back, a very red flush on his countenance, and a very considerable number of oaths on the tip of his tongue. He was supported on his right hand by a French officer of the guards or *cuirassiers*—a fine, well-whiskered, moustachioed personage, who drank like a fish, ate like an ogre, and was an object of unexceptionable attraction to three young ladies, who, with their mamma, were seated opposite to him, and were laughing very heartily at every word that issued from his lips—although he could not speak one syllable of English, and they were as innocent of any intimacy with the French language as the babe unborn. In their immediate vicinity were half a dozen young gentlemen from the Emerald Island, who had most probably agreed to sit together at the *table-d'hote*, talk as loudly as they could, utter as many vulgar jokes as their imaginations might suggest, and render themselves as disagreeable as they possibly could do. Two or three well-dressed and well-behaved Englishmen, a quiet Scotchman, a deaf Welchman, and a couple of small boys with their father, afforded at the upper end of the table a sort of contrast or relief to the noisy Irishmen in their immediate neighbourhood. These were the most prominent characters which Mr. Pickwick remarked in an assemblage of about fifty people.

"Have you been to the Italian Opera, ma'am?" enquired the young rake, of the vulgar stout lady.

"No, Sir, I has not," was the reply. "I can't say as how I likes the theayters; they're so very hot, and I does pus-pire so, it is quite uncomfortable."

"Lauk-a-daisy, mamma," whispered one of the young ladies; "how you are talking, to be sure!"

"Nonsense, Jemima," returned the stout lady; then addressing herself once more to the young gentleman with the dissipated look, she said, "I once went to the Academy of Music—the Great Opera, as they call it—and what with the squeeging, the pus-piration, the skrecking of the actresses, the glare of light, and all kinds of unpleasantness, I never was so wexed in all my life—quite bewildered and all no-how, you know."

The pale-faced gentleman sipped his Madeira, and did not venture to continue the conversation.

"D—— that waiter," exclaimed the parson; "he's taken away my plate."

"And, by Jasus, I'd break his head, if 'twas mine," kindly hinted one of the Irish gentlemen.

"I've a devilish great mind to do so," returned the clerical individual; but, on second thoughts, he consoled himself with a clean plate, the half of a boiled fowl, and another bottle of Macon.

"Well, I never did see such a skrimmage, in all my born days!" exclaimed the vulgar lady, for the information of the rakish youth on her left hand: but that individual was quite inaccessible to the farther attempts of his stout neighbour to renew the conversation.

"By the powers, Sir—and you have made free with my bread!" cried one of the Irish gentlemen to the French *cuirassier*.

"*Je ne vous comprends pas, Monsieur*," observed the officer, with a desperate shrug of the shoulder.

"Arrah, and by Jasus, now, that's an insult, Misther Frog," ejaculated the irascible Irishman; "and it's that which Michael O'Donovan won't put up with at all, at all!"

The old French dandy, perceiving that there was some misunderstanding, and comprehending its trivial origin, explained to his military fellow-countryman the cause of the Irish gentleman's indignation.

"Nothing but a mating or the most abject apology will suffice," cried Mr. Michael O'Donovan in a menacing manner.

These alternatives were duly interpreted to the *cuirassier*, who desired the sexagenary dandy to inform the offended Irishman that he was perfectly willing to meet him in the Bois de Boulogne on the following morning at day-light. The choler of the irascible son of Erin considerably diminished when the polite offer of the French *cuirassier* was made known to him; and after a brief consultation with his friends, he declared that he would be satisfied if the guardsman would order the waiter to supply another piece of bread, and in that case he would not press the meeting. The officer disdained to listen to the proposition; so the Irishman had to call for his own bread, and decline the hostile interview into the bargain; while the Frenchman sipped his wine as if nothing of importance had occurred.

Mr. Pickwick had seen quite enough of the *table-d'hote* for that

day: he accordingly whispered a proposal to adjourn to the quarters of their friend Mr. Adolphus Crashem, to which Messieurs Boozie and Winkle immediately assented. Mr. Weller was desired to attend his master; and a hackney-coach, or *fiacre*, speedily conveyed the party to the pleasant and commodious tenement in which the heir-apparent to the fortunes and territories appended to the great name of Crashem, temporarily resided.

"Strange fate, Sir, is that of a man of the vorld," observed Mr. Weller, as he followed Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Boozie across the outer court, in front of the gaol.

"How's that, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"A pallis von day, and a prison the next, Sir," returned Mr. Weller: "a bust o' laughter escapes the buzzim von minit, and a sigh of voe the next, Sir," added the philosophising domestic.

"Too true," assented Mr Pickwick, in a mournful voice.

"And yet," continued Mr. Weller, in a more cheerful tone, "that vich the English calls sympathy, is nothing more than vot the Dutch calls gammon."

Mr. Pickwick's philanthropy could not admit the irresistibility of this argument; but his objections are not recorded, inasmuch as they were not uttered; for the arrival of the little party at the iron-barred door put an end to the discourse.

After a great deal of trouble, it was ascertained that Mr. Crashem had possessed himself, by some means or another, of a room to himself, and that he was then in the very act of entertaining a select party in the said identical chamber. Thither did Mr. Pickwick and his companions accordingly proceed, and great was the welcome with which they were received. Mr. Crashem undertook to conduct Mr. Weller to the Café, where that latter gentleman was desired to amuse himself with any edibles or potables he might fancy, until his attendance should be again required; and on his return to the little chamber of which he was the temporary proprietor, Mr. Adolphus Crashem proceeded to introduce his friends to each other.

"This is Mr. Lipman," said he, pointing to a middle-aged shabbily-dressed individual, who was seated behind an enormous tumbler of gin-punch, and puffing away at an immense wooden pipe, intended to imitate a meershum. "And this is Mr. Jopling," continued Mr. Crashem, indicating a young gentleman with a short apoplectic neck, bloated countenance, and faded silk dressing-gown. The ceremonies of introduction accordingly took place—Mr. Tims bestowed a nod of recognition on Mr. Pickwick and his companions—and every one seated himself at the table, with a determination of doing justice to the various liquors spread thereon.

"This is very kind, now, of you," cried Mr. Adolphus Crashem, addressing himself to Mr. Pickwick, "coming to see a fellow in difficulties. And those gentlemen"—pointing to Mr. Lipman and Mr. Jopling—"have behaved devilish kind also—haven't they, Tims?"

Mr. Tims nodded and grinned an affirmative, and Messieurs Lipman and Jopling bowed their thanks for the compliment.

"I've been here just two years, come January," said Mr. Lipman, "and whenever I see an Englishman brought in, I invariably introduce myself to him, and do any thing I can to serve him."

"So do I," echoed Mr. Jopling; "don't I, Lipman, when I can?"

"That you do, old fellow," said the individual thus appealed to. "But your time will be out in a few months now."

"How is that?" enquired Mr. Pickwick. "I suppose, Sir, your creditors have come to an arrangement at last, then?"

"No, Sir, not they," replied Mr. Jopling, with a wink at Mr. Lipman. "But the law of April, 1832, has for them, though."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, considerably enlightened.

"Certainly," continued the young gentleman in the silk dressing-gown. "My debt is under five hundred francs—20*l.* you know that is—and two years' imprisonment emancipates a foreigner from all debts under that sum."

"Then, I am to understand," observed Mr. Pickwick, mildly, "that a certain term of incarceration in this country annuls liabilities to a certain amount."

"Exactly what it is," responded Mr. Lipman. "No foreigner can remain in prison more than ten years—and no Frenchman more than five, even if he owes millions. Capital, ain't it?"

"It is, indeed," said Mr. Pickwick; "and very humane laws they appear to be."

"Decidedly," exclaimed Mr. Lipman. "Why, what do you think?"

"I really don't know," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"But you will when I tell you, though," continued Mr. Lipman, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and filling the wooden bowl with strong Belgian tobacco. "When Ouvrard, the celebrated Commissary to the Victualling Department of the War-Office, was imprisoned here for several millions of francs, he had one entire wing of the building to himself. Whenever new debtors came in, and were chummed in the rooms he had, he invariably bought them out, and paid their debts for them, in order to keep his apartments to himself. Those were fine times, or my name isn't Lipman. Ouvrard had balls, parties, *soirées*—all kinds of things here, every night; and the first people in Paris visited him in this identical prison.* Wasn't that a go for you?"

Mr. Pickwick of course replied that it was, and assented in an equally polite manner to Mr. Jopling's observation that it was a "devil of a rig." Mr. Tims pronounced it as his opinion that it must have been a "prime spree," and Mr. Adolphus Crashem declared it was "a monstrous rum lark." The four gentlemen then reciprocally agreed that Ouvrard was "a trump;" and Mr. Lipman appealed to Mr. Pickwick, and asked him if he didn't think the Frenchman was a "regular bean?" An answer in the affirmative was immediately given; and the whole party, having got upon so good and agreeable an understanding with each other, found Mr. Crashem's room very snug and comfortable.

"Won't you blow a cloud, old fellow?" enquired Mr. Adolphus Crashem, after a short pause, addressing himself to Mr. Winkle. "Come, do as we do;" and he handed a paper of cigars to that gentleman, who had very naturally cast his eyes towards the window, and was preparing to descant upon the state of the atmosphere, when Mr. Crashem's action explained the meaning of his words.

* Facts.

"Thank'ee," returned Mr. Winkle; and he blew a cloud accordingly.

"You don't lush, Sir," said Mr. Jopling to Mr. Pickwick. "Pass the bingo, Lipman, and let the gentleman make himself a stinger;"—and Mr. Pickwick, acting upon a faint idea, or a natural impulse originated by Mr. Jopling's invitation, mixed himself a glass of spirits and water, and proceeded to drink it—an example that was immediately followed by Mr. Boozie, who thereby so much elicited the admiration of Mr. Lipman, that he was forthwith pronounced to be a "regular brick, and no mistake."

All this was very friendly and very gratifying; and the more the liquor was poured out, the more lively became the conversation. A variety of amusing anecdotes was told for the benefit of those present; and as they all lacked veracity, so they were replete with interest and marvel.

"There's an archbishop in here," observed Mr. Jopling, when Mr. Adolphus Crashem had just brought to a conclusion a long tale relative to his friend Sir Patrick Pocock.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick. "A Roman Catholic, I should imagine?"

"Oh! yes," returned Mr. Jopling; "and a devilish good fellow he appears to be. Got lots of tin, I understand."

"Ah! the proprietor of a mine, no doubt," said Mr. Pickwick. "Those sources of wealth in Roman Catholic countries generally fall into the hands of the clergy."

It is extremely distressing to be compelled to state, that at this remark, Mr. Jopling burst out into a clamorous horse-laugh, in which he was most cordially joined by Mr. Lipman. The infectious mirth spread like wild-fire to Mr. Tims and Mr. Crashem; and then Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Boozie, and Mr. Winkle deemed it necessary to join in the hilarity, although they were entirely at a loss to divine its cause. Thus is it that great men are frequently led by the force of example to give their assent and countenance to that which they do not at the moment understand, and the mystery of which they never think of penetrating; and to this circumstance may be attributed the passing of a variety of extraordinary and extravagant measures in the Houses where the senate of England is wont to assemble.

"Well, after all," exclaimed Mr. Winkle, when the mirth had subsided into little more than a distant tittering; "after all, this is not such a bad place, though."

"*I* should think not," cried Mr. Jopling with great emphasis on the pronoun. "There's a billiard-room,—a hazard-table,—a *rouge-et-noir* table,—*roulette*,—in fine, every kind of lark that a man can wish for, here."

Mr. Jopling's encomiums upon the New Prison were interrupted by the entrance of two small boys, in blue jackets and clean white aprons, who speedily cleared the table of the glasses, bottles, cigars, &c., and thereupon arranged a scanty white cloth, and divers plates, knives, and forks, &c., instead. They then disappeared, and in a few minutes returned with a variety of dishes, which they quietly spread upon the table, to the infinite delight of Mr. Crashem and his company.

"Turn out the confounded cat!" exclaimed Mr. Jopling, as that domestic appurtenance to the Café entered the room. But Mr. Lipman

considerately interfered in the poor animal's behalf by verbally consigning it to the hottest regions he could think of: so the party sate down to supper, and the cat retired to snooze beneath a chair in one corner of the room.

Mr. Crashem had caused a most splendid repast to be prepared; and as—for we scorn to deny or withhold one atom of the real truth—Messieurs Lipman and Jopling had made a quiet and economical dinner at three o'clock, p. m., off a couple of baked potatoes and a piece of butter each, they did not fail to do ample justice to the supper at which they so unexpectedly and pleasantly found themselves seated. The bottle was circulated freely, and a variety of toasts was proposed and drank with considerable enthusiasm. Indeed, to such an extent was the hilarity of the evening carried, that Mr. Pickwick entered into two arguments and made an oration,—Mr. Boozie only contradicted himself upon his own evidence seventeen times in the course of an hour,—Mr. Crashem cited his own family on three-and-twenty different occasions,—and Messieurs Lipman and Jopling emptied two bottles in drinking wine with Mr. Winkle, while Mr. Tims amused himself by rolling small pellets of bread and aiming them at Mr. Pickwick's nose.

Now it happened that Mr. Tims was a very quarrelsome gentleman when he had taken a small drop too much: and it also happened on the evening of which we are writing, that such a quantity of liquor, in the shape of wine and spirits, had been circulated and drank, that in Mr. Crashem's room there was scarcely a sober person after supper. Mr. Tims unfortunately advanced some statement, which Mr. Boozie, intending to set himself right in a "confounded lie" he had just uttered, unhappily contradicted; and a row was the immediate consequence. Mr. Tims flew at Mr. Boozie—and Mr. Boozie's wig flew to the opposite side of the room: Mr. Lipman attempted to enact the part of mediator, and was immediately converted into a belligerent by a knock on the eye which Mr. Crashem inadvertently gave him: Mr. Jopling prepared to assault Mr. Winkle; and Mr. Winkle crept under the table, while Mr. Pickwick, thinking to restore order by putting Mr. Boozie in possession of his wig, commenced a most vigorous search after the hairy tegument, and caught hold of the domestic cat, which a delusion of the optics had represented to his sight as the lost *perruque*. The cat, thus unceremoniously disturbed in the midst of her slumbers, flew at Mr. Pickwick and dragged her claws spitefully across his expressive countenance; nor was it before a considerable time had elapsed that the animal could be reduced to pacific measures of any kind.

It were hard and difficult to say how long the warfare might have been waged, had not Mr. Weller suddenly rushed into the room, and speedily compelled the combatants to desist from their pugilistic strife.

"Five minutes more, Sir," said that gentleman, addressing his master, so soon as something like order had been restored, "an' ve shall all be booked, as the devil said ven he sent for to take Doctor Faustus."

This powerful appeal to the feelings of great men could not for one moment be resisted. Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Winkle, Mr. Boozie, and Mr. Tims accordingly took a certain vague and undefined leave of the pri-

soners, and accompanied Mr. Weller to a hackney-coach, which that faithful domestic had already taken the precaution to fetch, and which speedily deposited the somewhat intemperate gentlemen at the gate of Meurice's hotel in the Rue de Rivoli.

CHAPTER XII.

MR. TRACY TUPMAN FORMS AN ACQUAINTANCE WITH A SYSTEMATIC GENTLEMAN OFTEN QUOTED IN MODERN TIMES, BUT NEVER BEFORE INTRODUCED TO THE READER IN ANY PUBLICATION.—THE SOIREE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

IN the meantime, what were the exploits of the gallant Tracy Tupman? Reduced to the very verge of desperation by what he deemed the unhandsome—the shameful—the unpardonable conduct of his great leader, Mr. Tupman rushed precipitately from his presence, as before stated, and hurried into the street with that recklessness of whither he was going, which all men in such situations deem it necessary to assume or feel.

"O Pickwick!" said Mr. Tupman, as he walked along the Rue de Rivoli; "and is it come to this? Must the world, with its usual scandal, falsely represent the cause of our separation? Shall the chroniclers of our respective histories be left vainly to speculate on the springs of this, the most important event in our mutual lives? and what can we say to Snodgrass—to Winkle—to Crashem—and to Boozie? In writing to the one, and conversing with the others, what excuse must we make for an alienation as untoward as it is distressing?"

Such were Mr. Tupman's reflections—and to this extreme pitch of misery had he just arrived, when it struck him that, if Mr. Pickwick were capable of dining after so lamentable an occurrence, there was no reason in the world why he himself should starve. No sooner had this light of intelligence dawned in upon his brain, than a second ray, no less luminous than its precursor, immediately darted through his mind, and recalled to memory the existence of certain eating-houses—styled *restaurans*—in the Palais Royal. Thither did Mr. Tupman forthwith repair, sighing at every step, and having totally eschewed the jaunty and *debonnaire* airs he had so successfully adopted in the morning. He did not, however, forget his appointment for half-past nine; and his bosom felt a partial relief when he reflected on the agreeableness of the evening he was destined to pass.

But a lengthy train of reflections and a quick pace invariably carry us at last to some point or another; and on this occasion, these two agencies conducted Mr. Tupman in safety to the very identical gallery of the Palais Royal where his visual organs had first detected the presence of youthful beauty in the morning. There were a great many brilliantly lighted cafés—but Mr. Tupman knew not which to choose. Like the ass placed betwixt two bundles of hay, he was likely to starve in the midst of plenty, from the mere fact of being unable to decide between a number of imposing candidates for his favours.

In this state of uncertainty, a good genius fortunately came to

Mr. Tupman's aid, in the guise of a short English gentleman of about fifty, who was puffing a cigar most courageously as he walked along the magnificent colonnade.

"Pray, Sir, can you inform me which is the best place to dine at, here?" enquired Mr. Tupman, convinced that the short gentleman was a native of Britain from the circumstance of his having very audibly condemned to the lower regions, and in no very equivocal terms, a small boy who had just run against him.

"I can, Sir," replied the short gentleman, eyeing Mr. Tupman from top to toe. "A stranger in Paris, I presume, Sir?"

"Quite," answered Mr. Tupman.

"Do you wish to do the thing slap up, or merely grub on an economical system?" demanded the short gentleman.

"Oh!" said Mr. Tupman, hesitating, "it's quite immaterial, I assure you."

"Decide, Sir," cried the short gentleman, laconically.

"Well—I don't care, then, if I have a good dinner," returned the Pickwickian.

"That's also a part of *my* system," observed the stranger, with a smile. "Do you wish for company?"

"I certainly dislike dining alone," replied Mr. Tupman.

"My system again," cried the short gentleman; "so here goes;"—and with these words, he took Mr. Tupman's arm, threw away his cigar, and hastened towards Very's celebrated *restaurant*, without uttering another syllable; so that Mr. Tupman began to imagine that silence was a part of his new friend's system, also.

"You take soup, of course?" said the stranger, when he and Mr. Tupman were comfortably seated at one of the nice little tables in the public room at Very's. "*Garçon, soupe à la julienne pour deux!*—What wine do you like?"

"I have no choice, I assure you. Indeed, I should be better pleased if you would cater for me, as you appear to be so much more conversant with French manners and customs than myself."

"Admirably spoken!" exclaimed the stranger: "quite agrees with my system! But, before we proceed any further, let us understand each other. What is your name?"

Mr. Tupman detailed his *prænomen* and *cognomen* forthwith.

"And mine is Walker," returned the systematic gentleman;—"Mr. Hook Walker, at your service."

Mr. Tupman bowed, expressed himself much pleased with having formed the acquaintance of Mr. Hook Walker, and looked very amiable and satisfied.

"Excellent soup, this," observed Mr. Walker.

"Excellent," cried Mr. Tupman. "But have you ordered any wine?"

"I sit corrected," said Mr. Walker, seriously; and in a moment the waiter received orders to supply his very best Saint Emilion, and to put a couple of bottles of Champagne in ice. The two gentlemen then took wine together, and Mr. Walker enquired if "fish formed a part of Mr. Tupman's system of dining?" To this a reply was given in the affirmative; and turbot, with the necessary concomitant of lobster sauce, was instantaneously commanded. This was followed by a

variety of dishes, of which Mr. Tupman did not even know the names, but to which he nevertheless rendered ample justice; while Mr. Hook Walker drank glass after glass with such rapidity that Mr. Tupman began to wonder at certain component parts of the system adopted by his new acquaintance.

At length, having waded through at least ten different courses, the dessert was placed upon the table, and Mr. Walker, with systematic precision, cut two enormous slices out of a very fine pine-apple; one of which he handed to Mr. Tupman, and the other he judiciously kept for himself. The iced Champagne was then produced, and Mr. Walker condescended to chatter a little more than he had hitherto done, at the same time endeavouring to convince Mr. Tupman that all his actions, important or trivial, were regulated on a certain system from which the treasures of the universe could never induce him to depart. Mr. Tupman was highly delighted with the philosophical reasoning of Mr. Walker, and sighed when he recollected how much Mr. Pickwick would have been pleased with the society of so singular an individual, had he been present.

The time glided swiftly away, and at a quarter past nine Mr. Tupman informed his companion that he had an appointment, and must bid him farewell for the present.

"Never miss your appointments, my dear Sir," exclaimed Mr. Walker, with his usual solemnity. "Regularity and punctuality are the most essential basis of my system.—Have the kindness to order the bill—I will return in one moment—and we will settle our score."

Mr. Walker then lounged idly out of the room, and Mr. Tupman felicitated himself on not only having passed a very agreeable evening, but on having formed an acquaintance that might probably turn out to be of material advantage to him during his sojourn in Paris. Five minutes elapsed while he made these exhilarating reflections—another five passed away as he discussed the remainder of his Champagne—and at length the half-hour was struck by the clock in the public room where he was seated.

"Strange!" said Mr. Tupman to himself, "I hope no accident has befallen him. Suppose I give him another five minutes; the Marchioness's house is close by—and one never ought to be *too* punctual."

But the supplementary five minutes passed away, and still Mr. Hook Walker returned not. Mr. Tupman began to be seriously alarmed for his friend's safety; but as he could wait for him no longer, he called for the bill, which amounted to a hundred and twenty-seven francs—or a little more than five pounds sterling—paid it with a slight grimace, and hurried away to the residence of Madame de Volage in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, marvelling that Mr. Walker's system should contain so grievous a fault as that of making his associates wait for his return in a manner at once mysterious and alarming.

After a great deal of trouble, Mr. Tupman discovered the abode he so anxiously sought; and resuming his jaunty air of the morning, he mounted lightly up the six flights, and pulled the bell with the violence of a man whose inward conviction is that he will be received with affectionate welcome. The door was opened by a black servant in a livery which looked very well by candle-light; and Mr. Tupman was ushered into the presence of his hostess. Madame la Marquise

expressed her unfeigned delight at the honour he conferred upon her by "assisting" at her "*petite reunion*," and Mademoiselle Anastasie blushed a more graceful welcome. The visitor was then duly introduced to a couple of fat old ladies with large turbans, three cross-looking old men, each wearing a red riband at his button-hole, and four or five young girls, who stared at Mr. Tupman, and tittered amongst themselves. Mr. Tupman went through this ordeal as well as might be expected, and seated himself, when the ceremony was concluded, next to the beautiful Anastasie, whose loveliness was not a little enhanced by the exceedingly low gown and short petticoats—atrocities very unusual in France—which she wore. Mr. Tupman gazed upon her charms with the eye of an unmitigated old libertine; and soon renewed, in a *sotto voce*, the same tender conversation he had held in the morning, and for which he was admirably primed by the quantity of Champagne he had ere now imbibed in the society of the systematic Mr. Hook Walker.

While Mr. Tupman and Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage were engaged in this little flirtation, which, with the politeness the French are so much renowned for, no one else appeared to notice, the black servant arranged three or four *ecarté* tables in becoming order, and the Marchioness, with amiable condescension, invited her guests to amuse themselves at cards. Two of the cross-looking gentlemen and the old ladies with the high turbans accordingly made up a couple of games, and the young ladies crowded round the tables to bet their five-franc pieces, which they did in a manner at once interesting and curious to a degree. At length Mr. Tupman caught the generally pervasive spirit of speculation, and gallantly proposed a game with Mademoiselle de Volage, which, after a variety of little objections easily over-ruled, and a multitude of blushes that did high credit to the modesty of her feelings, was accepted.

Whether the exhilarating effects of the wine he had drank or of the love that filled his soul, bewildered his mind; or whether he purposely, and from motives of gallantry, lost those large sums that were won by Mademoiselle de Volage at every consecutive game, has never transpired. It is nevertheless certain that upwards of a thousand francs, or 40*l.* of English money, changed proprietors that evening, and passed from the red morocco pocket-book of Mr. Tupman to the elegant green silk purse of the fair Anastasie.

But who could resist those bewitching smiles—that blush of maiden modesty which tinged her cheek, when Mr. Tupman's foot touched her's beneath the table—or the enchanting confidence with which she suffered her foot to remain in delicious contact with his? When she smiled, a beautiful row of ivory teeth was displayed—and when she dealt the cards, a diminutive hand, white as alabaster, attracted her lover's impassioned gaze. Surely a thousand francs were not too dear a penalty to pay for enjoyment such as this!

At length the cards were laid aside, and the black servant announced that supper was served in an adjoining room. Thither did the whole party repair; and if, in the course of the repast, the Marchioness did become somewhat intoxicated, and display certain pugilistic predilections totally at variance with her rank and prior deportment, the kindly feelings of Mr. Tupman readily found a becoming excuse in the

fact, that as the worthy lady had herself compounded the rum-punch, she must necessarily have tasted it several times to ascertain if any improvement were wanting. Another little circumstance, which Mr. Tupman deemed admirably calculated to illustrate the peculiar vivacity of the French, was too remarkable to escape his notice. The cold viands had been devoured with extraordinary expedition, and the wine and the rum-punch had circulated most freely, when a dish of sweets was placed upon the table. Upon this prize did the five young ladies all proceed at once, and a pleasing variety of snatching, screaming, pushing, and vociferation, immediately ensued. Mademoiselle Anastasie laughed heartily, and the Marchioness, in order to compose her feelings, drank another tumbler of the reeking punch, while the gentlemen, whose button-holes bore the emblem of the Legion of Honour, commenced a desperate attack upon some Burgundy which the black servant placed before them.

At this crisis, the Marchioness requested her daughter to favour the company with a song; Anastasie accordingly commenced the following popular air. But as our readers will be better pleased by reading the said celebrated National Song in English, we give the following faithful translation:—

LA PARISIENNE.

Gallant nation! now before you
Freedom, beck'ning onward, stands;
Let no tyrant's sway be o'er you—
Wrest the sceptre from his hands!
Paris gave the general cry,
Glory, Fame, and Liberty!
Speed, warriors, speed,
Tho' thousands bleed,
Pierc'd by the leaden ball, or crush'd by thundering steed;
Conquests wait—your foemen die!

Keep your serried ranks in order;
Sons of France, your country calls!
Gory hetacombs accord her—
Well she merits each who falls!
Happy day! the general cry
Echoed nought but liberty!
Speed, warriors, speed,
Tho' thousands bleed,
Pierc'd by the leaden ball, or crush'd by thundering steed;
Conquests wait—your foemen die!

Vain the shot may sweep along you,
Ranks of warriors now display'd!
Youthful gen'rals are among you,
By the great occasion made!
Happy day! &c. &c.

Foremost who the Carlist lances
With the banner-staff has met?
Freedom's votary advances,
Venerable Lafayette!
Happy day! &c. &c.

Triple dyes again combining,
See the squadrons onward go:
In the country's heaven shining,
Mark the various-coloured bow!
Happy day! &c. &c.

Heroes of that banner gleaming,
Ye, who bore it in the fray!
Orleans' troops! your blood was streaming
Freely on that fatal day!
From the page of history
We have learnt the gen'ral cry:
Speed, warriors, speed, &c. &c.

Muffled drum! thy music lonely
Answers to the mourner's sighs;
Laurels, for the valiant only,
Ornament their obsequies!
Sacred fane of Liberty,
Let their mem'ries never die!
Bear to his grave
Each warrior brave,
Who fell in Freedom's cause, his country's rights to save,
Crown'd with fame and victory!

"Charming novelty!" thought Mr. Tupman within himself; and he would have doubtless sank into a delicious reverie, had not the fair Anastasie, in a sweet and amiable voice, requested to be informed what o'clock it might be by Mr. Tupman's watch. The gallant and deeply-enamoured swain hastened to comply with the wishes of Mademoiselle de Volage, and accordingly produced his handsome gold repeater, the hands and the dial of which indicated the hour of one.

"Oh! what a lovely watch, dat dere!" cried Mademoiselle Anastasie: "pray, make me see dat sweet ittle ting;"—and, with the most ingenuous playfulness, the young lady insisted upon Mr. Tupman's taking off his watch and chain, and subjecting them to her critical examination. This request was immediately complied with, and the fair Anastasie scrutinized the valuable repeater in a manner, and with an expression of countenance, that seemed to approve of Mr. Tupman's taste in the selection of little articles of jewellery.

At the very moment when the enraptured lover was about to whisper some sweet compliment in the ears of the fair Anastasie, and compare her eyes to the *deux trous rubis* of his gold watch, or some such high-flown metaphor, one of the cross-looking gentlemen inadvertently snuffed out the candle opposite to him, and the Marchioness as awkwardly extinguished the other in attempting to light the first. An extraordinary scene of confusion immediately took place. Mr. Tupman was knocked from one side to another,—his carcase was the focus at which a hundred fists appeared to meet,—and in his agony he called in vain upon the fair Anastasie for relief. As he has subsequently declared, it appeared as if he were forcibly borne forward by three or four powerful individuals, and eventually shoved out of the front door into the passage, which was as dark as pitch. Dreading lest Mademoiselle de Volage might sustain any injury in a disturbance which he firmly believed the cross gentlemen had created in a moment of ebriety, the gallant Mr. Tupman precipitated himself down the six flights

of stairs, and rushed into the street for the purpose of alarming the police. The wicket of the *porte cochere* was closed violently behind him,—and there stood Tracy Tupman, alone, without his hat, *minus* his watch and a thousand francs—in a deserted street, at about half-past *one o'clock in the morning.*

But he had no time for reflection—Anastasie was in danger—Anastasie was left with a set of drunken brawlers—Anastasie was his only care. Frantically did Mr. Tupman run up the street in the direction of the *Rue de la Paix*—vociferously did he call "Police! Police!"—the echoes alone answered his appeal. At length he arrived in the street above mentioned, and there his cries alarmed the sentry at the guard-house opposite the Royal Stamp-Office. Mr. Tupman was accordingly accosted by that functionary, who in vain endeavoured to ascertain the meaning of the unfortunate Englishman's signs and sayings, and who came to the very natural conclusion that the gentleman was drunk. Mr. Tupman stamped and swore; the soldier shrugged his shoulders, smiled, muttered a terrible oath, and resumed his walk up and down in front of the guard-house.

What was to be done? the wretched Tracy Tupman saw that remonstrance and clamour were useless, and bethought himself that if he could only manage to get as far as Meurice's hotel, he might there explain his difficulties, and procure assistance to return with him and rescue Anastasie from the violence of the drunken rioters. He accordingly approached the sentinel, ejaculated the words, "Hotel Meurice," several times, and eventually succeeded in making himself understood. The sentry accordingly summoned another soldier from the guard-house, and, under this convoy, Mr. Tupman was conducted to the *Rue de Rivoli*, and to Meurice's hotel. With all the fervour of gratitude did he extract from his waistcoat pocket a five-franc piece, which he tendered to the good-natured soldier, who thus had served him as guide and protection in his misfortunes. But the soldier drew back with an air of offended dignity, muttered something about a "*militaire Français*," and "*l'honneur de la jeune France*," and having bowed politely, hastily retraced his steps to the guard-house.

Now it happened that a post-chaise had arrived at Meurice's hotel only a quarter of an hour previous to Mr. Tupman's return, and there were lights in the office still. Thither did Mr. Tupman forthwith repair, and there, to his joy, did he find the attentive M. Cailliez seated at his desk. To him was the narrative of his woes immediately unfolded; but the Frenchman, instead of sympathizing with the unfortunate Tracy Tupman, and without proffering his aid in the service of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, bestowed meet comfort and consolation in the following terms:—

"My dear Sir," said M. Cailliez, with an ill-suppressed smile, "you have fallen in with a set of swindlers and cheats, who, taking advantage of your inexperience in Paris, have successfully made you their dupe. By this time, they have all decamped from the apartments which they probably only retained till fortune should throw a victim in their way. Repining is useless, Sir,—and, even if you did make known your loss to the police, the thing would get into the papers—and—excuse me, Sir—all your friends will laugh at you."

Mr. Tupman uttered not a syllable. His countenance assumed an

expression of the most profound despair—and in the intense agony of the moment, he seized a glass of brandy and water which stood upon M. Cailliez's desk, and drank off the contents without stopping. He then caught hold of a flat candlestick, and rushed wildly up to his bed-room, disgusted with himself, disgusted with the name of love, disgusted at the deceitfulness of the world, and discovering, when too late, that Mr. Pickwick's advice was invariably founded upon a basis of reason and propriety that would do credit to any country and to any age.

"Come in, Sam," said Mr. Tupman on the following morning, when the attentive Mr. Weller knocked at his door, and was preparing to deposit thereat one of the mystic pots of hot water before alluded to: "come in, Sam—pray do—come in."

"Vell, Sir," observed that individual, acting as he was so solemnly adjured to do: "vot's the next indictment, now, as the gen'leman remarked at the Old Bailey?"

"Sam," said Mr. Tupman, "I'm very—very miserable."

"Air you, indeed, Sir?" enquired Mr. Weller. "An' pray vot is it that may have caused sich a melan-cholly disposition on your part, Sir?"

"My feelings are too sensitive, Sam," returned Mr. Tupman dolefully."

"So the boy said, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, "ven he bust out a-cryin' on the oc-casion of his bein' carried to the House o' Cor-rection."

"I have quarrelled with my old and revered friend, Pickwick," continued Mr. Tupman, heedless of Sam's remarks; "and I don't dare present myself to him till—till—"

"Ne-cessity is the nat'ral parent of in-wention, Sir, as the nobleman said ven he pawned his vatch," interrupted Mr. Weller; "an' if so be you rek-vire a ambassador, as ull represent your case to his high and mightiness, I des-say that Samivel Veller, Esk-vire, vill not ob-ject to fill that 'ere capacity."

"Tell him, Sam," exclaimed Mr. Tupman, enchanted with the idea, "tell him that I am ready to apologise for my conduct of yesterday afternoon, and that I hope he will think no more of the matter."

"*Weni, widi, wici!*" remarked Mr. Weller to himself—(he had heard the German courier, who spoke all languages, make use of these words the day before)—"so here goes for another am-bassador pleni-potentiairy;"—and with all the importance of a diplomatic envoy, he proceeded to execute the commission which Mr. Tupman had entrusted to his discretion.

"I see you ain't left your portable pocket Bible at home, Sir," observed Mr. Weller to his master, when he had duly arranged the shaving *apparatus,* and was diving into the trunk in quest of a clean shirt.

"No, Sam," said Mr Pickwick, taking off his night-cap, and putting on his spectacles; "I never travel without it."

"Excellent book, that Bible, Sir," remarked Mr. Weller after a short pause. "Teaches von many admirayble maxims."

"So it does, Sam," coincided Mr. Pickwick. "Which do you think is the most instructive and the best calculated to make a good man?"

"That von in partickler, Sir," answered Sam hastily, "vich talks about the for-giveness of von's enemies, Sir, to be sure."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, as if a new light had suddenly broken in upon him.

"To be sure, Sir," continued Mr. Weller: "vot can be more beautifuller than that there passage in the Scripture—If a chap give you a cuff on von side o' your physiognomy, Sir, pre-sent him vith t'other? I don't mean another cuff, Sir—but t'other side o' the cheeks."

"That, you know, is allegory, Sam," observed Mr. Pickwick, with a faint smile.

"Hallegory or astronomy, Sir," continued Mr. Weller, earnestly, "it's all the same in the end, as the gen'leman—but no, Sir—ve musn't joke in a serious matter;" and this was the first time in his life that Sam had stopped short in the midst of one of his favourite figures of speech; and in order to relieve his feelings, he shook his head sagaciously some half-a-dozen times, with peculiar elasticity and airiness.

"Such is your opinion, is it, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick, after a pause.

"My o-pinion, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, emphatically, "is that that maxim, vich preaches for-giveness, *en-ceteray*, *en-ceteray*, *is* the best."

"So it is, Sam," assented Mr. Pickwick; and now that the ice was fairly broken, Mr. Weller adroitly turned the conversation to the penitence of the wretched Mr. Tracy Tupman.

"Where is my dressing-gown, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, after a long pause, during which he appeared to have been wrapt up in deep contemplation.

"On that there cheer, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, indicating the place with a dexterous movement of his right arm; "an' a wery nice robe-de-shamble it is, too, as the French say."

"'Tis decided!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick; and having descended from his couch, that great man proceeded to envelope his illustrious person in the dressing-gown alluded to ere now. He then hastened to Mr. Tupman's chamber, and a most affecting interview forthwith ensued.

"Stay," said Mr. Pickwick, as his friend was about to narrate his adventures of the preceding evening. "The weather is rather cold—and—as I haven't got on my breeches, you shall tell me all this presently. We *may* have time, when I think of it, to converse before breakfast. Meet me in the coffee-room in ten minutes, and you shall tell me all your wrongs."

"Agreed!" cried Mr. Tupman; and Mr. Pickwick returned to his apartment to complete his toilet.

Seven minutes and a half sufficed for Mr. Tupman to wash and dress himself on this occasion; and the moment he had thus performed the first duties of the morning, he descended to the coffee-room, to await the arrival of his immortal leader. Three or four gentlemen were seated at as many different tables, engaged in the agreeable occupation of discussing their breakfasts and the newspaper; but the countenance of one who was eating muffins with great precision, immediately attracted Mr. Tupman's attention; and on a nearer survey, he could not fail to distinguish the lines and lineaments peculiar to the face of his friend of the preceding evening, Mr. Hook Walker.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN INTERESTING MEANS OF DIVERSION IS PROPOSED BY MR. HOOK WALKER.—MR. WELLER'S ANECDOTE.—THE OBSTINACY OF FRENCH HORSES.—THE GENDARME IS AGAIN INTRODUCED.

"Ah!" said Mr. Tupman, when his visual rays were concentrated, as aforesaid, in the somewhat capacious *focus* formed by the body of the systematic gentleman; "ah! Mr. Walker—how do you do, Sir?"

"Never answer with my mouth full," returned that individual, as he leisurely scanned Mr. Tupman's person from the crown of his head to the heel of his polished boot, and disposed of another muffin to refresh himself during the survey. "Well, Sir—and how do *you* do?" enquired Mr. Hook Walker, when his curiosity and hunger were both appeased.

"Very well, thank'ee," said Mr. Tupman. "But what became of you last evening?"

"When I got out into the open air," responded Mr. Walker, "I suddenly recollected that I had left my purse at home; and, although it is not a part of my system to disappoint a friend, I fancied that I should have time to run to my lodgings, and fetch it. Pray, how long did you wait for me?"

"About twenty minutes," said Mr. Tupman.

"Well," continued Mr. Hook Walker, "it might have been half an hour before I returned; and then you were gone. I offered to pay my share of the dinner at the bar; but found, to my mortification, that you had settled it for me."

"Oh! as for that," said Mr. Tupman, producing a small piece of paper from his pocket, "we can easily—"

"So I said to myself," continued Mr. Walker, speaking with an unusual volubility, "'this matter may be very pleasantly arranged. Tracy Tupman has given me a dinner; and on another occasion Hook Walker will give him one.' This, indeed, is a part of my system."

Mr. Tupman made a slight grimace, returned the equivocal-looking paper to his waistcoat pocket, and muttered something about being "very happy," &c., while, in reality, he felt and looked any thing but satisfied with this portion of his new acquaintance's systematic behaviour. His countenance, however, cleared up when Mr. Pickwick entered the room; and an introduction was speedily effected between that gentleman and Mr. Hook Walker.

"Fine morning, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, with a benignant smile; for this was the truly original and ingenious manner in which that extraordinary individual invariably commenced a conversation, with an occasional variation of terms, substituted as circumstances might demand.

Mr. Walker never compromised the rectitude of his system by the utterance of an untruth, as he informed Mr. Pickwick; so before he answered the above observation, he took a good long stare at the snow through the windows which looked into the Rue de Rivoli.

"Yes, Mr. Pickwick, it *is* a fine morning: frosty—cold—crisp—and healthy. Of course you will exhibit yourself in a sledge on such a day as this?"

"A sledge!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"A sledge, Sir," coolly replied Mr. Walker. "And if you have no objection, I will join the party. Sociability is the fundamental basis of my system."

"Do you really mean to say that people go about in sledges in Paris?" enquired Mr. Tupman.

"I could not tell a falsehood, Sir," solemnly responded Mr. Walker; while Mr. Pickwick expressed his admiration at the sentiment, by a whole catalogue of his most philanthropic smiles.

"Then I should very much like to try one," said Mr. Tupman, alluding to the sledges, and glancing towards his leader.

"We will, Tupman!" cried that excellent gentleman, with the firmness and decision he was ever wont to exemplify in affairs of gravity and moment.

"Boozie and Winkle will of course join us," suggested Mr. Tupman.

"Are they friends of your's?" enquired Mr. Walker.

"They are so," returned Mr. Pickwick. "I shall, moreover, take my servant with me."

"We are six in all, then," said Mr. Hook Walker. "And a very excellent number it is, too—seeing that a sledge holds three people—so you had better leave the matter to me—and I'll manage it to the satisfaction of all concerned. Have you breakfasted?"

"We have not," said Mr. Tupman.

"Well, then," continued Mr. Walker, "go and get your breakfasts; and in an hour I will join you. All shall be prepared: regularity is one of the most essential parts of my system."

Mr. Walker bade Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman a temporary adieu, and departed to execute the commission with which he had charged himself, while the two friends exchanged a few hasty observations, and Mr. Tupman gave a short, but correct account, of his adventures of the preceding day; after which they sought their sitting-apartment, where Messieurs Boozie and Winkle were already waiting for them to commence breakfast. The projected amusement for the morning was soon made known to the two last-named gentlemen, and a hearty concurrence in the eligibility of the scheme was the immediate result of the communication.

"Wery singular oc-currence took place last night, to a gen'leman as hangs out in this 'ere hot-tel, Sir," began Mr. Weller, when he came to receive his master's orders, as soon as the breakfast had been disposed of.

"Was there, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, encouragingly.

"Yes, there where, Sir," answered Mr. Weller; "an' this is vot it vos. Vant of money, Sir, appears, in these times, to be nothin' more or less than a out-an'-out epidemic disease, as the farmer said ven his pigs vos afflicted vith the measles: so, in order to remedy this inconwenience, a young gen'leman o' the name o' Wincent must needs go to a gaming 'ouse, vich they calls Friskcarter's; and there, if so be as his ac-count is cor-rect, he vins a pretty tidy sum in a inconcei-wable

short space o' time. Rail-roads vos nothin' to the ce-lerity vith vich he grabbed the blunt: his pockets vosn't big enough, so he shoves the money into his boots, and every-vere else he could imagine. Figger to your-self, Sir, this wery great fool, instead o' coming right straight avay home, takes it into his stupid head to go an' see a female acquaintance of his'n, vich lives on t'other side o' the vater—in the Borough, you may say, Sir, ven thinkin' o' London. So he gets to a bridge—I forget the name, now, Sir—and there he fell among thieves, vich plundered him, beat him like a sack, and left him for dead. Now, Sir, to foller up the hallegory, the night-police, like so many good Samaritans, come up and catched him as he laid on the pavement. 'He's stiff enough,' said von on 'em, vich vos the remark made by the jealous husband as starched his pretty vife's neck to perwent her turnin' her head to look at the young men. So, findin' that he hadn't got no life in him, they takes him to the Morgue, vich receptacle for defunct carcasses you may remember, Sir, ve saw t'other day."

Mr. Pickwick nodded assent, and Mr. Weller proceeded to relate the issue of the adventure.

"Vell, Sir—they carries him off to the Morgue—they knocks up the porter—and they strips Mr. Wincent naked, and lays him on von o' them ere leaden benches, over vich the vater flows to keep the bodies fresh. They then departs, and the porter vonce more locks up the gates, and retires to bed. But he hadn't been there long fust, before a devil of a row vos heerd in the room vere the dead bodies vos lying. The porter thinks he's got another customer, and is wery joyful on that ac-count; for his salary con-sists o' three francs for each body as is brought in, vich makes about eighteen hundred francs a-year, as I heerd say. So he jumps up to open the gate; but vot is his terror and alarm ven he sees the last new-comer a-caperin' about the place like mad, and tryin' to break through the partition! The porter falls down vith a terrible cry; and the patrol, vich vos passin' at the wery nick o' time, breaks open the gates, and dis-covers the voeful scene. The porter vos clean dead; and the gen'leman vos as lively as you or me, Sir. Now von o' two things must ha' taken place: either the devil has put a sperit into the body o' Mr. Wincent, or else he vos only in a trance, and the cold vater brought him *to* again. But here he is in the hot-tel, safe an' sound, save and ac-cept a violent cold and the rheumatics; an' he svears like vinkey that he'll never go to a gambling-'ouse as long as he lives; but that, if he does, he von't cross no more bridges at von o'clock in the mornin'."

"This is an extraordinary tale, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, with a dubious shake of the head.

"So the boy said, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, "ven his gran'mother told him the story o' Jack and the Bean-Stalk."

"Ah!" said Mr. Boozie, with a most terrific obliquity of vision, "I once was acquainted with a man—a woman, I mean—what a confounded falsehood I was telling, to be sure!—who died on a Christmas day—and—no, it wasn't—I beg your pardon—'twas a New-year's day, now that I think of it—and her ghost paid my aunt—my mother, I mean—an annual visit for fifty years after."

"Wery re-markable things there air, in this vorld, too," observed Mr. Weller, with a particularly solemn shake of the head: and perhaps he would have displayed a few more aphorisms of the same kind, had not a waiter entered the room, and presented a couple of letters to Mr. Pickwick.

"You may go, Sam," said that gentleman; so Mr. Weller forthwith disappeared with the waiter, in obedience to the somewhat intelligible hint he had just received.

"The first," said Mr. Pickwick, opening one of the epistles, "is an invitation for us all to an evening party—or *soirée*, as they call it—at the English ambassador's, for the day after to-morrow."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, joyfully: "then, after all, it was lucky that I thought of bringing my best black coat, with the white silk linings to the skirts."

"Is that the fashion?" enquired Mr. Boozie, who was also included in the invitation to Lord Pompus's *soirée*, at the British Legation Hotel, in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Tupman, with considerable emphasis.

"I shan't go to that expense," said Mr. Boozie, after a moment's consideration: "but I don't care if I pin a couple of neat cambric pocket-handkerchiefs inside my coat-tails."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, impatiently. "Who is the other letter from, Pickwick?"

"From our friend Snodgrass, I declare!" ejaculated that gentleman, as he unfolded the second missive: "and in poetry, too—unless my eyes deceive me!"

But Mr. Pickwick saw correctly; and, after a few running comments upon the ability of the immortal Snodgrass, and a request that Mr. Boozie would not leave the room, as the letter could not contain any thing he might not hear, the contents were communicated to his attentive audience, by Mr. Pickwick himself, who, in an impressive and solemn tone of voice, most admirably suited to the composition, read the following beautiful effusion:—

"Think not, dear friend, that while afar in foreign lands you stray,
Our hearts (though rude those hearts may be, compar'd with thine) are gay;
Oh! no—we miss the smiling face that cheer'd our evening meal,
And when the wine is on the board, 'tis then thy loss we feel!
Alas! thou art not with us now, and pitiful our state is,
While thou art roaming far away with Tupman as Achates.

"I have but little news to tell, for England still is quiet,
Although our sister-isle each day be menac'd with a riot;
Things seem to jog on just the same as when you went away,
And Mr. Bentley still maintains of publishing the sway,
While many an author starves within the Fleet or Banco Regis—
But such can never hap to you with Weller as your Ægis.

"Books pour upon us from the press of this illustrious city,
In giant heaps—romance and verse—historical and witty—
Bulwers* and Bayleys†—Gore and Galt—Hope, Howard, Hook, and Hervey,
Enough to turn the reader's mind insane or topsy-turvy!

* E. L. Bulwer, and H. L. Bulwer.
† T. Haynes Bayley, and F. W. N. Bayley.

Thus publishers and authors both will carry still the game on,
While you and Winkle roam afar—a Pythias and Damon.

"I went to Murray t'other day, and offered him a poem:—
'Three thousand lines—by Snodgrass penn'd—you certainly must
know him—
The poet erst in Pickwick's train!'—'Twas thus my case I stated—
(Eight hundred pounds were the reward that I anticipated)
'The poem's the *Pickwickiad*, in twenty cantos written,
And erudite as any work of Newton or of Dytton!'

"But Murray said the times were bad to patronise the Muses,
And tho' he follow public taste, he still that taste abuses.
Thus have I with my friends the reputation of a poet,
Without the pow'r to let the world of literature know it:—
My verses still are beautiful—I wish some bard could see 'em,
Or get a specimen inserted in the *Athenæum*.

"Of that enough; for I must bring this letter to a finish.—
Be sure, dear Pickwick, my esteem for you shall ne'er diminish:—
Tell Winkle that the kindest love is sent by Arabella,
And Mary bade me say as much for her to Mr. Weller.
Another little Snodgrass soon my marriage-bed will bless—
Meantime—remember me to all—

"Your most sincere,
"A. S."

As Mr. Pickwick brought the perusal of this most affecting and truly erudite epistle to a conclusion, Mr. Weller, whose person had never left the immediate vicinity of the door, nor his ear the key-hole, made his appearance to announce the arrival of the sledges.

"There's a gen'leman, Sir," said he, "as calls his-self Mr. Hookey Valker, a-vaitin' below vith a couple o'queer-lookin' wehicles vich han't got no veels; and he says as how that they're for Mr. Pickvick and his friends; vich is very con-siderate on his part, as the nobleman said ven his younger brother had him locked up in a mad-house."

"Oh! they are come, then, are they?" enquired the delighted Mr. Pickwick, to the infinite dismay of his dependant, who, however, relieved his mind by giving vent to a few facetious allusions to the style and title of Mr. Hook Walker.

"Now, then," cried Mr. Winkle, casting a look of apprehension at Sam; "let's start, if we mean to go."

"Hark avay, Sir!" cheerily shouted Mr. Weller; and the party descended to the court-yard, where the two sledges, under the command of Mr. Hook Walker, were waiting. The vehicles were painted in a variety of fantastic ways; and the horses' heads were adorned with large waving plumes of red feathers. Each sledge had one horse and three seats: two individuals might be accommodated with places on the front bench, and a third suited in the same agreeable manner by means of a little dickey behind. Mr. Winkle expressed his extreme delight at these satisfactory preparations, and looked as miserable as he well could; Mr. Tupman racked his brain, but fruitlessly, for an excuse to secede from the party; Mr. Boozie fixed his wig tight upon his head; Mr. Pickwick mustered up a desperate species of courage;

and Mr. Weller nodded blandly to Mr. Hook Walker, a portion of whose system was to return the unwelcome familiarity with a most withering frown.

"What do you think of this, Sam, for a morning's amusement?" enquired Mr. Pickwick of his faithful domestic.

"Wery grand, but wery dangerous, Sir, as the sailor said ven his ship caught on fire," was the reply.

Mr. Pickwick made no answer; but seizing the reins of the nearest sledge, he jumped lightly into his seat, and beckoned Mr. Winkle to occupy the one next to him. Mr. Weller was then ordered to mount up behind; and the first equipage, under the control of Mr. Pickwick, sailed gaily out of the hotel-yard; while the other, presided by the systematic Mr. Hook Walker, and likewise bearing the somewhat portly forms of Mr. Tupman and Mr. Boozie, speedily followed its convoy's example, amidst the smiles and jokes of the assembled crowd of idlers.

In obedience to directions previously given by Mr. Walker, Mr. Pickwick turned into the Rue de Castiglione, and thence burst, in all the glory that ever surrounded or accompanied a sledge, into the Place Vendôme, round which magnificent octangular *arena* several other and similar vehicles were already parading. In some there were gaily-dressed French ladies, who laughed and chatted so loud that no doubt could possibly remain in the minds of spectators as to the extent of the enjoyment they experienced from the drive; and in others there were tawdrily-attired English ladies, who ate buns, and offered each other biscuits as they made the circuit some hundreds of times. And all this while, Napoleon stood unmoved on the summit of his Column!

"Don't you think you're going very quick?" enquired Mr. Winkle, with a very pallid countenance.

"I can't do any thing with these French horses!" cried Mr. Pickwick peevishly, as he gave a most violent tug at the reins, which operation caused the animal to rear up on his hind legs, and nearly precipitate the three gentlemen on their backs in the middle of the Place Vendôme.

"Pray, take care!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, when they had again recovered a more correct *equilibrium*.

"So I do," said Mr. Pickwick; and here he pulled the right rein and loosened the left so suddenly, that the horse flew off at a tangent up the Rue de la Paix, and all but dashed the sledge against the curbstone of the pavement. Mr. Weller thought it high time to interfere.

"Beg your pardon, Sir, as the judge said ven he forgot to call the man in to pass sentence o' death upon him, but don't you think t'ould be as vell to slacken von's pace a couple o' mile or so an hour? Pleasure afore danger, Sir," added the faithful valet with a nod to Mr. Winkle, whose head was turned in an appealing manner towards Mr. Pickwick.

"I think you are right, Sam," said the latter gentleman; "suppose we *do* draw in a little;"—and in the excitement caused by the exhilarating nature of the diversion, Mr. Pickwick bestowed a most unmerciful lash on the flanks of the already agitated animal. Mr. Winkle uttered a low moan and shut his eyes close—Mr. Weller clung to the

railing of the little dickey on which he was perched—and Mr. Pickwick examined the whip-handle, as if the result of such an interesting scrutiny would enable him to account for the increased celerity of the steed's pace.

Horses, like boys, can be trained to any thing by the use of gentle methods; but when they fancy themselves ill-treated, they are both most obstinate and self-willed beings.

The animal in question was not unlike his brother animals in feelings and disposition. He was therefore considerably amazed at the harsh treatment he received; and after manifesting a most deadly intention to overturn the vehicle, if possible, he took to his heels, and galloped up the Boulevards at a most alarming rate.

"A wery pleasant diwersion, this is, too," thought Mr. Weller within himself, as the sledge glided over the hard snow with a precipitation that afforded a considerable degree of amusement to the crowds of foot-passengers that were assembled on the Boulevards.

"I'll master him yet," said Mr. Pickwick in an agony of fear; and as a first step towards the accomplishment of that desirable end, he, with admirable prudence and presence of mind, dropped both whip and reins, and applied his hands to the rails of his seat in order to retain his balance. The horse felt that he was free, and scoured away as if he were on a race-course, and without the slightest drag to encumber his progress.

The rate, at which the three adventurous travellers were now proceeding, would have brought them in about five minutes to the Place de la Bastille: and if they had only contrived to reach that spot, they would have completed half the circuit of those Boulevards which circumvent so considerable a portion of Paris. But on the very summit of the hill whence a pleasing view of the Porte Saint Denis is afforded to the spectator who may happen to be on that eminence, the sledge encountered a ponderous omnibus, and immediately overturned, the traces snapping in halves, and the unfortunate trio of great men being precipitated into the quiet and undisputed seclusion of a large heap of snow that had accumulated by drifting on one side of the road. As is usual in such cases, the horse stood perfectly still, and doubtless pondered on the ruins he had caused.

A crowd was immediately collected on the spot; and most exhilarating were the loud peals of laughter that welcomed Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Weller, as those gentlemen emerged, each like "a sea Cybele fresh from ocean," from the heap of snow into which they had fallen. But the noisy mirth of the assembled multitude was speedily hushed, when an officer of Gendarmes cantered up to the place on a fine black steed, gaily caparisoned in the most approved military style.

"Ah!" exclaimed the officer, dismounting from his horse, and calling to the crowd to make way; "is it possible?"

"It is indeed," cried Mr. Pickwick, settling his spectacles on his nose, and his hat on his head; which ceremonies being completed, he was enabled to grasp with unfeigned joy the hand of the Gendarme, in whom he recognised his diligence-acquaintance, M. Dumont. "Here's a pretty job!" added the immortal gentleman, as he glanced at his soiled gaiters and dim-looking shoes.

"Nothing, my dear Sir, nothing!" said the Gendarme, bowing to Mr. Winkle, and nodding to Mr. Weller. Then, with the most laudable promptitude, the Frenchman summoned a hackney-coach, entrusted his own steed, and the hired one with the shattered equipage, to a couple of Municipal Guards who were passing at the time, and accompanied his new acquaintances to Meurice's hotel, where a couple of bottles of mulled wine and a cheerful fire soon restored them to health and spirits. Mr. Weller retired to narrate his adventures to those inmates of the kitchen who could speak or understand his own vernacular tongue; and M. Dumont accepted the pressing invitation of Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle to partake of a little *dejeuner-à-la-fourchette*, which was forthwith ordered. The conviviality of the meeting was presently increased by the return of Messieurs Walker, Boozie, and Tupman, to whom no accident nor adventure of any consequence had happened.

In due time the *dejeuner* made its appearance, and was done ample justice to by every one present. Some more mulled wine, and a supply of cold *ditto*, were also annexed to the repast. There was also plenty of laughter at the expense of Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle, who however took it all very good-naturedly, and guaranteed themselves against an access of rheumatism by very liberal potations of the spiced claret. After luncheon, they all drew themselves round the fire; one more bottle of wine was voted, and two were brought instead, either through the carelessness of the waiter or the inadvertency of Mr. Pickwick from whom the order emanated; and thus a very sociable understanding was immediately entered upon by all parties. In the course of conversation, Mr. Winkle related the anecdote touching Mr. Vincent, which had been so affectingly told by Sam Weller a few hours previously; and the truth of the tale was partially corroborated by the evidence of M. Dumont. Story-telling is catching; so Mr. Pickwick narrated one—and then Mr. Boozie attempted another—and lastly, Mr. Tupman solicited M. Dumont to take his turn.

The good-natured Gendarme did not suffer himself to be requested twice: he accordingly settled himself comfortably in his chair, took a sip of mulled wine to clear his throat; and then prefaced his narrative by stating that the adventure, which had happened to Mr Vincent, reminded him of one the particulars of which would never be effaced from his memory, were he to exist a thousand years.

"And yet," said M. Dumont, "I have seen some singular things during my period of apprenticeship to a service, which, as I before told you, requires a heart steeled against every kindly feeling and compassionate sentiment. Whether I be ever able to eradicate the following adventures from my recollection, I shall leave you to judge after the recital."

Having thus prefaced his narrative, the Gendarme related that which will be found in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PONT NEUF.—A TALE.

MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE.—ST. LEON.—THE CATASTROPHE.

The night was dark and stormy—the rain fell in torrents—and as I occasionally looked over the high parapet of the Pont Neuf, or New Bridge, I could catch a glimpse of the rapid waters of the Seine flashing as they passed through the wide arches, even in the midst of gloom and obscurity. Ever and anon the moon made a feeble essay to pierce through the clouds that veiled her; and then the tall towers of Notre Dame were faintly visible, their black and threatening appearance adding fresh gloom to the scene.

I drew my cloak closely around me, and walked at a quick pace up and down the bridge. A murder, under circumstances peculiarly horrible and revolting, had been committed there the night before; and information had been received at the Prefecture, that a gang of desperate characters intended to haunt that quarter, in order to intercept any individuals who might be obliged to traverse the bridge in the dead of night. To prevent the commission of farther atrocities, a Gendarme was ordered to patrol the Pont Neuf, and that part of the Island which lies in its immediate vicinity, until some clue should be discovered to track the assassins.

This was in the year 1827; and it was the first time I had been appointed to a dangerous service. I had only been incorporated amongst the body about six weeks—and hitherto my duties had not compromised my safety. Now every thing was to be dreaded at the hands of the midnight murderers whose motions I was appointed to watch; and the utmost circumspection, keenness, and courage were necessary.

The hour of midnight struck at the College of Four Nations; and, as if it had waited for that gloomy hour to commence its rage, the storm, that had been for some time gathering, burst forth with appalling violence. The lightning glared in frequent flashes; and while its vivid rays illuminated the atmosphere, the towers of Notre Dame, the domes of the University, the Sorbonne, the Pantheon, and the Hospital of Invalids, although each so far apart from the others, all distinctly met my view as I cast a hasty glance around.

It was nearly one o'clock, and the storm continued with unabated violence. Being in the month of September, the night air was cold in the extreme; and my thick cloak was but a feeble protection against the intemperance of the weather. During the momentary silence that ensued immediately after a loud clap of thunder, hasty footsteps fell upon my ear, and a momentary struggle—as if it were between two or three men—took place at a little distance. I ran to the spot whence I fancied the noise proceeded—a sudden flash of lightning aided my steps—and at the moment when I laid my hand upon the arm of an individual against whom I ran, the splash of a heavy body falling into

the waters below convinced me that a foul deed had been accomplished, and that I had arrived too late.

Without losing my presence of mind for one moment, I detained the person, whom I had secured, in a firm grasp, and called loudly for assistance. The sounds of retreating footsteps instantly fell upon my ears, and I knew that one of the accomplices had escaped. Engaged as I was in holding an individual who struggled violently and with a considerable degree of strength, it was impossible to pursue, or ever attempt to secure the fugitive.

"Release me!" cried the voice of an evidently young man, in deepest agony—it was the voice of him whom I had arrested—"release me, and ample shall be your reward!"

"Not for worlds—not for all the treasures of France and Navarre!" cried I, having entirely mastered his resistance, and effectually made him my prisoner.

"O think of my disgrace—of my ruin—of the infamy that will accrue to a noble house!" he continued, his voice almost choked with inward emotion.

"Who are you?" said I, as I led him across the bridge towards the Island of the City.

"Oh! if I only thought that the revelation of my name—of my rank—and the certainty of a liberal reward from my poor old father—who, God knows! is ignorant of the vicious courses pursued by his son, his only son—his heir—Oh! I would tell you all!"

"*Monsieur*," said I in a determined tone of voice, "communicate nothing to me that you would not have repeated to my superiors; for to the guard-house must you go!"

No sooner had I uttered these words, than by a sudden and desperate effort of skill more than of strength, he released himself from my grasp, sprung upon the parapet of the bridge, and was about to join the person whom he had a few minutes before consigned to a watery grave, when I, fortunately for the ends of justice—though unhappily as it regarded himself—caught the skirt of his coat, and again made him my prisoner. In a few moments he was carefully secured in the guard-house on the Quai des Orferves

On the following morning I attended at the office of a Commissary of Police of the *arrondissement*, and made my *deposition*. The accused was immediately sent for; and when he was taken into the presence of the magistrate, he was instantly recognised by that gentleman, as a Monsieur St. Leon, the only son of a Count of the same name. His father was one of the richest and most respected noblemen in the Faubourg Saint-Germain; but the accused, his son, was one of the most dissipated young men, and one of the most notorious gamblers, in Paris. On being requested to give an account of himself, and explain the extraordinary circumstances that had occurred on the Pont Neuf, as related above, he obstinately denied the fact of a murder having been committed, persisting in declaring that the sound of no splash in the water had met his ears, and that he was as unjustly suspected as he had been shamefully detained.

At this stage of the examination, an individual, whom I recognised to be the *concierge* or porter of the Morgue, entered the office, and requested to speak to the Commissary of Police. An audience was

accordingly granted in a private room; and when the magistrate re-entered the *cabinet*, his cheek was pale, and his countenance indicated extreme horror. A spectacle so unusual in a public functionary of the police produced an immediate and singular sensation within me. Meantime the Commissary seated himself once more—reflected for some minutes—and then, suddenly turning to the prisoner, said in an impressive tone of voice, "Unhappy young man! I can scarcely believe the tale I have just heard:—and yet, if it be true, you must have mistaken one for another—for another, perhaps, whom you had previously met at the gaming-table, and whose pockets were filled with the produce of an iniquitous passion! It is not for me to judge you, young man—God grant that you may be innocent! Suspicions of a serious nature rest against you—a higher tribunal must decide upon their validity. In the meantime, let me tell you that fate—destiny—or, rather, your own vices have probably prepared for you an awful doom—and a terrible tale remains for you to hear!"

St. Leon's knees trembled—his cheek became very pale—his eye rolled wildly—and his whole frame became suddenly enervated. The Commissary noticed the effect he had produced upon the accused—and, probably satisfied with the result of his *exordium*, he proceeded as follows:—

"Young man, a deadly deed was committed last night—a mangled corse lies at the Morgue, exposed to public view at this moment—the features are disfigured, most probably by a concussion against the projecting stones of one of the pillars of the bridge—but a letter in the pockets of the deceased—a letter addressed to him—proves his identity with—listen, young man, and tremble—for that mangled corpse, with those lacerated features—that corpse is all that remains of your father!"

"O horror, horror! a parricide!" cried St. Leon—and he sank senseless on the floor, whence he was raised, and immediately conveyed to the prison of the Conciergerie adjoining the Palace of Justice.

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"What o'clock is it now?" enquired St. Leon in an almost inaudible tone of voice.

"Half-past six," was my reply.

"And they come at seven—do they not?" he added convulsively.

"At seven precisely," I answered.

"Not a minute later—not even one single, paltry minute?" cried he, his tongue barely giving utterance to the words in which he thus expressed his wish to procrastinate the fatal moment as long as possible.

"Not a minute later," said I, unwilling to hold out delusive hopes to the wretched man.

"In another half-hour, then, they will be here!" exclaimed St. Leon, sitting up in his bed, and clasping his hands together, as he spoke. "Oh! in half an hour they will be here—to—to lead me to—the—scaffold!"

"Pray, compose yourself, *Monsieur*," I began, sensibly affected myself.

"Compose myself! What—when the very knife of the *guillotine* is trembling over my head—when hell is yawning to receive me—

when my murdered father's curses pursue the parricide, his son—oh! how can I compose a mind lashed by the scourges of ten thousand demons? Compose myself!" he continued, in a tone where bitter irony and agonized feelings were expressively blended together—"compose myself! And already the instrument of death is erected—the cold steel glitters in the rays of the morning—already thousands have congregated to witness my last moments—and already have the devils begun to stir up unquenchable fires to punish me for my crimes!"

I shuddered as he spoke, but did not venture an observation. I nevertheless inwardly hoped that it would not often come to my turn to keep my vigils by the bed-side of a condemned malefactor during the last night he had to live.

"Is it possible," said he, after a short pause—"is it possible that my vicious predilections can have led me to commit so horrid a crime? Oh! no—it is impossible—thank God, it is a dream!—it is a dream—a fearful dream! Dumont," said he, in a more tranquil tone.

"Yes," was my answer; "what can I do for you?"

"Dumont," he continued, "I have had a most horrid dream! I fancied that I had murdered my own father—my good, my excellent father, with his white locks, and his kind smile, and his mild blue eye that always beamed tenderly on me—that I did not respect those hoary locks—but that I was a parricide! Oh, all this I dreamt, Dumont—and it was a long, a very long dream! And then I fancied I was in the Conciergerie—in a dungeon, and watched by a Gendarme—but it is all a dream—oh! a most horrible dream!—and you are my friend, Dumont, and *not* a Gendarme! And then I thought that my last hour was come—"

As he spoke the clock struck seven.

"—And that I heard footsteps in the corridor leading to my cell—"

At that very moment the heavy tramp of approaching feet, drawing nearer and nearer to the door, fell upon my ears.

"—Then," continued the unhappy malefactor, "I dreamt that the clanking sounds of heavy keys were heard—"

And the keys clanked in the door as he uttered these words.

"—And, lastly, that the myrmidons of justice came to take me to the *guillotine!* But, thank God, it is all a dream!"

He ceased—the door flew open—and a couple of Gendarmes, with dark-lanterns in their hands, entered the cell. Although it was perfectly light in the open air, within the condemned dungeons all was gloom and obscurity. St. Leon gazed for one moment upon the military forms that stood before him, and then gave one loud, long, piercing shriek, which echoed far around, and which will ring in my ears till the last day of existence. At the same time he exclaimed, "O God! O horror!—it is not then a dream!"

In a state bordering upon the most listless apathy, into which he relapsed almost immediately after this terrible expression of the deep—deep anguish of his mind, he was led to a room below, where he was forced to swallow a cup of coffee. Another malefactor was to be executed with him—he was already there, and was engaged in smoking his pipe with the utmost coolness. In ten minutes the Gendarmes proceeded to shave the hair away from the backs of the criminals'

necks—their coat-collars were cut off—and every thing that might impede the fatal blow of the knife was carefully removed.

St. Leon was condemned to suffer the penalty due to the crime of parricide—viz., to walk to the place of execution with a black veil thrown over his person. The preliminaries being thus completed, the solemn procession towards the scaffold began. An hour was required for the cart, in which the prisoners were conveyed, to reach the fatal spot where the *guillotine* was erected; for in those times executions took place at the Barriere du Trône. Once—and once only—during that awfully impressive journey, did St. Leon raise his head; it was when he ascended the steps leading to the platform of the *guillotine*. He cast one glance upwards—his whole frame trembled convulsively—his cheek became deadly pale—and a half-smothered cry escaped his lips. The other criminal exhibited as much courage as St. Leon did pusillanimity. He was the first to suffer, and he died like a hero, if such hardihood deserve so distinguished an epithet. *His* crime had also been murder.

St. Leon was then tied to the fatal plank, then perpendicular—his head hung almost upon his breast—he seemed unconscious of all that was going on; till when the plunk was lowered to a horizontal position, and then his lips faintly breathed these two words—"My father!" I stood near him on the scaffold—I saw the executioner apply his hand to the cord—the knife, already reeking with blood, fell—and the gory head of the parricide rolled into a basket beneath!

When the Gendarme had thus brought his interesting tale to a conclusion, he rose, tossed off the remainder of his wine, and, having taken a cordial leave of his new friends, departed, with a promise to call at Meurice's hotel as often as his avocations would permit him.

CHAPTER XV.

AN EVENING AT THE AMBASSADOR'S.—THE ABSENT MAN.—DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THE USAGES OF FRENCH AND ENGLISH SOCIETY.—ANECDOTE CONNECTED WITH TWO ILLUSTRIOUS PERSONAGES.—A DEADLY FEUD IN WHICH MR. PICKWICK IS UNEXPECTEDLY INVOLVED.

The English in Paris, as in every other part of France, are for the most part migratory, remaining stationary just so long as their purposes, safeties, and conveniences are suited. Many of them exhibit a strange versatility of disposition in the manner in which they move from one hotel to another at the end of every week; while others have obtained for the English nation at large the enviable reputation of a peculiar absence of mind, by certain abrupt departures from furnished lodgings, at which slight liabilities in pecuniary shapes remain unsatisfied. Indeed, the English in Paris are invariably possessed of a passport already signed; and this singular instance of precaution is the more praiseworthy, as they are often obliged to undertake a journey over the frontiers on a very short notice. It is a fact—and we will not attempt to deny the imputation against a people for whom we en-

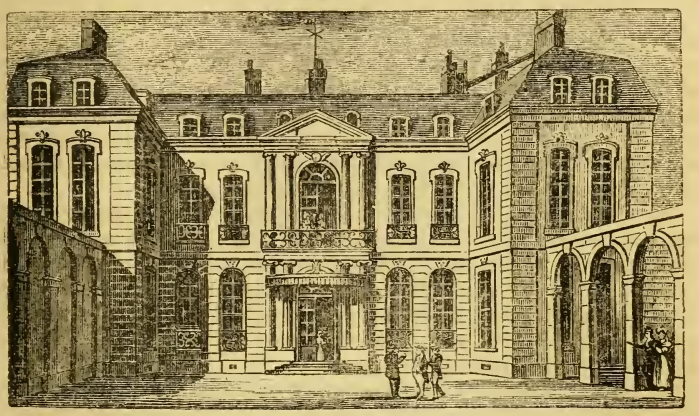
tertain great esteem—that the bad taste of the French is not unfrequently exemplified by the celerity with which they send in their bills, or consign their English debtors to the salubrious atmosphere and watchful care of the New Prison, in cases of defalcation in stipulated payment. Hence nine-tenths of the English in Paris take furnished lodgings for a year, and keep them for three months; it being just upon the verge of quarter-day, that they effect those sudden local changes which so materially enhance their credit amongst our Gallic allies. In some instances, they hire furnished lodgings at their own expense for six weeks, and are supplied with unfurnished ones for a couple of years at that of certain tradesmen, into whose good graces and books they have got at one and the same time.

The clerks at "Galignani's" and the "French, English, and American" Libraries, have established payment in advance, as a rule not only calculated to prevent confusion, but to ensure the payment of any money at all; as they are perfectly well aware that many of the most elegantly dressed young Englishmen in Paris not only frequently lack a *sou*, but also occasionally experience the slight privation of going without a dinner for weeks together.

In imitation of the above necessary precaution, the proprietors of those hotels that are frequented by the English, invariably send in their bills every Monday morning; and not a few of the same are as invariably dishonoured; upon which a pleasing variety of excuses is the immediate result, and the inventive faculties of the English mind are displayed to a most edifying and imposing advantage. It is, however, extremely distressing to relate, that, in many of these instances, the word of an "English Gentleman" is shamefully disbelieved, and several of our independent brethren are ignobly ejected from those caravanserays where their patronage is so miserably appreciated. Hence must the English "at home" cease to wonder, if an English nobleman be arrested by physicians whose claims he evidently intends to curtail, if not to avoid; nor should the London prints lend themselves to the support of an unaccomplished fraud, by publishing garbled accounts and statements at once devoid of foundation, evidence, and truth. The impression that the English are all rich and generous, is fast wearing away in France; and the one which is rapidly succeeding that golden opinion, is the idea—thanks to the misdeeds of some of our fellow-countrymen!—that the words "Englishman" and "swindler" are almost synonymes.

Be it, moreover, said *en passant*, that if it be at all a desirable object to witness an Englishman-in-France in his full bloom, such curiosity can alone be gratified by a visit to the debtors' prisons in the various frontier towns. *There* may be seen specimens of the freeborn sons of Britain, wandering about the gaol-yard, in seedy shooting-jackets, or in their dirty shirt-sleeves, manfully drowning care in the fumes of tobacco smoke, and both in the contents of a small glass of brandy-and-water. Yes—there may they be seen walking backwards and forwards, with their hands, and nothing else, in their pockets; anxiously awaiting the arrival of some new prisoner, into whose favour and purse they may respectively introduce themselves and their fingers; and passing days and days in the pleasing variety of getting drunk at night, and rising sober in the morning, or in quarrelling and wrangling with the jailor, and with each other.

A considerable number of such representatives of "Old England" embellished the crowded drawing-rooms at the hotel inhabited by Lord Pompus in the Faubourg St. Honoré. This mansion, over the gate-



way of which are the arms of England, surpasses the residence of all the other ambassadors, at the French Court. It was about half-past nine o'clock when Mr. Pickwick, in a pair of black kerseymere tights and flesh-coloured silk stockings, and attended by Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle and Mr. Boozie, was ushered into the presence of his Britannic Majesty's Ambassador, at the court of the Citizen King of the French.

Lord Pompus was a stout, aristocratic-looking individual, with a double chin, a flowered-silk waistcoat, a large gold watch-chain, and an old-fashioned snuff-box. Add to these appurtenances, a wife in a sky-blue satin *robe*, and two or three obsequious *attachés*, and that portion of the picture is complete.

His lordship, having heard the name of Mr. Pickwick shouted out by two or three servants stationed on the staircase, condescended to step forward and acknowledge the bows with which that gentleman and his companions announced their presence in the drawing-room. Mr. Pickwick was quite overcome by this remarkable instance of humility on the part of Lord Pompus; and, with the meritorious intention of displaying his full consciousness of it, he seized his lordship's hand and wrung it with all the friendly warmth usually displayed by Englishmen on such occasions. The ambassador withdrew his fingers somewhat hastily from the too cordial grasp; and having bestowed a ceremonious bow upon Mr. Pickwick's followers, hastily withdrew to another part of the room, much to the annoyance of Mr. Boozie, who had already begun to recollect that it was not in the East Indies, but in Canada, that he had once seen his lordship eating some turtle-soup in a pastry-cook's shop.

"How very agreeable this is," observed Mr. Winkle to his respected leader, who in vain endeavoured to get out of the draught at the drawing-room door.

"Very," returned Mr. Pickwick, receiving at the moment the whole weight of a fat Englishman upon his toe.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said the fat gentleman.

"No harm, Sir—I assure you," said Mr. Pickwick, his expressive countenance being entirely screwed up into wrinkles, through excessive pain.

"I am really very sorry," continued the fat Englishman; "but I am so remarkably absent."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, feeling the weight of the apology.

"Yes, indeed," replied the stranger, evincing a desire to become acquainted with our several heroes: "it was only this morning that I wiped my face with the newspaper, sate down to read the towel, and only discovered my mistake when the waiter came up to ask if I could spare *Galignani*, as another gentleman wanted it."

"Extraordinary!" observed Mr. Pickwick, eyeing the stout stranger from top to toe, and thereby ascertaining that he was dressed in deep black, was about forty-five years of age, and seemed as if he were not averse to that most satisfactory of human enjoyments—a good dinner.

"Nothing at all extraordinary, my dear Sir," said the absent gentleman, becoming still more intimate, "to what I sometimes do. Last night—for example's sake—I was playing back-gammon with a friend, called for a glass of hot brandy-and-water, threw the liquor into the board, and swallowed the dice."

"Very singular," said Mr. Tupman; and his observation was deservedly echoed by Mr. Winkle.

"You wouldn't believe it," continued the stranger, "but I forgot my own name the other day. I was walking in the Tuileries, heard somebody calling out a certain appellation, did not, for the life of me, remember that it was mine, and consequently did not answer. Presently the person tapped me on the shoulder, and—who do you think it was?"

"The king, perhaps!" guessed Mr. Pickwick.

"No," exclaimed the strange gentleman. "My tailor!"

"How very singular!" said Mr. Pickwick, drily.

"Rather," observed the absent gentleman. "But," he added, after a momentary pause, "here have we been chattering together for the last ten minutes, and are strangers still."

"My name is Pickwick, Sir," said that individual, always ready to form a new acquaintance. "And this is Mr. Tupman—that is Mr. Winkle—and this is Mr. Boozie."

"What! *the* Pickwick!" cried the stranger, with vast emphasis on the article. Mr. Pickwick bowed profoundly, and smiled slightly.

"Most happy to make your acquaintance, gentlemen," said the absent man, shaking each member of the little party by the hand. "My name 's Scuttle—Jeremiah Scuttle, at your service. And as you seem to be strangers here, I may as well act as your *chaperon*.—Follow me."

The absent gentleman elbowed his way through the crowd, and at length arrived near a fire-place, closely followed by Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Boozie, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle.

"This is comfortable," said Mr. Scuttle. "Now, let me call your attention to what is passing around us. You see that all the ladies are seated round the room like a regiment of Amazons, and that the gentlemen stand chattering in little groups together in the middle."

Mr. Pickwick nodded an assent.

"And you *may* think," continued Mr. Scuttle, with dignity, "that this social arrangement is very singular. No such thing. In France a gentleman invites any lady he chooses, to dance—she dares not refuse, if she have no other engagement, under the penalty of not being permitted to dance again all the rest of the evening—and when once the *quadrille* is over, the acquaintance ends at the same time. Here, there is no lounging on young men's arms—no parading round the room after the dance—as it is in London. All is conducted on a different and a better system."

"So I should imagine," said Mr. Pickwick, approvingly.

"Oh! I assure you that such is the case," continued Mr. Scuttle, who, however absent he might be with regard to his own affairs, was very communicative about those of others. "You do not even bow in the street to-morrow to a lady with whom you may have danced three or four times to-night, unless she were a previous acquaintance. No introductions—no familiarities. And, now—can you distinguish the English ladies from the French in that extensive circle of beauty and fashion?"

Mr. Pickwick, with his usual candour, did not hesitate to acknowledge his inability to discriminate so nicely as his new friend.

"Let me, then, act as your Mentor," said Mr. Scuttle, mysteriously. "Take a cursory glance at that circle of fair dames, before I begin."

Messieurs Pickwick, Winkle, and Boozie, did as they were desired; but Mr. Tupman's survey was long and critical.

"Now, then," resumed Mr. Scuttle, with a smile, "let me enlighten you. Those ladies, with low gowns that exhibit so much of their naked busts, with the *rouge* on their cheeks, and the preposterous loads of diamonds and precious stones to ornament themselves withal, are the English; and those with the high-bodied gowns, the simple, but neat ear-rings, necklaces, and chains, are the French. English ladies will never appear twice in the same dresses; the French have but three or four for the whole season. The former have costly things, but wear them as if they were thrown on their persons; the latter have less expensive apparel, but it becomes them as if they had made it for themselves with their own hands."

"Indeed," said Mr. Pickwick, with a smile of satisfaction, while Mr. Tupman was ogling a middle-aged lady at a little distance.

"You admire that wall-flower, do you, Sir?" enquired Mr. Scuttle, addressing his question to Mr. Tupman, who laughed feebly, and looked around to discover the garden-production in question, but sought in vain. "You do not understand," said the absent gentleman, after a pause: "I allude to the lady you were just now admiring. We call all those 'wall-flowers,' who do not dance."

"Ah! I comprehend," cried Mr. Tupman, triumphantly. "Yes—I admire the sex in general; indeed, I adore it, I may say;—" and Mr. Tupman looked at the moment as if he experienced a reciprocal feeling in return.

"Where are you staying, gentlemen?" asked Mr. Scuttle, suddenly awaking from a deep reverie. "I hope we shall have the pleasure of meeting again."

"At Meurice's," answered Mr. Winkle; and then *he* also expressed

a similar wish, in which his companions immediately and cordially joined.

"Well, that is curious," said the absent man; "for I am also located there, and my apartments are on the fifth floor, in the front part of the building."

"Precisely over our's," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick. "How very convenient!"

"So convenient," said Mr. Scuttle, "that I invariably mistake the stair-case, in a fit of absence, and do not discover my error till I am ringing at some person's bell up five flights of stairs in another part of the hotel. Absence of mind is a dreadful calamity, Sir."

"So I should imagine," observed Mr. Pickwick; "and somewhat dangerous at times, I should think."

"You are tolerably correct in your opinion," continued Mr. Scuttle. "The other morning I awoke at an early hour, and fancied myself a chimney-sweep. The impression was so strong upon my mind, that I seized the hearth-brush and shovel, and forthwith clambered up the chimney of my bed-room like a madman. Arrived at the top, I commenced a dismal howling in the usual style, and was only recalled to my senses, or rather recollection, by the onslaught which a fierce tom-cat immediately commenced upon me. Singular—was it not?"

"Very," returned Mr. Pickwick, who began to think that he had done well to visit foreign parts, as he daily encountered new characters, and on each occasion was materially edified by all he heard and saw.

In the meantime Mr. Tupman had screwed up his courage to the proper and necessary pitch, and had invited a young lady to honour him with her hand in the ensuing *quadrille*. Mr. Winkle, with a pleasing variety of blushes, followed his friend's example; and Mr. Boozie regretted that he had not pinned the cambric-handkerchiefs to his coat-tails, as he might then have danced also.

While Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle were thus engaged in "doing the agreeable" to their fair partners, the absent gentleman proceeded to entertain Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Boozie with a variety of amusing anecdotes, either illustrative and descriptive of Parisian habits and manners, or relative to the personages that crowded the splendid *salons* of the ancient palace of the family of Borghese—for such is the present abode of the English Ambassador in Paris.

"That lady," said Mr. Scuttle, "whom you see talking to the handsome French officer in uniform, and who is somewhat stout and dumpy, although not badly-looking withal, is the celebrated Mrs. Goffe, the authoress. She is a quiet, domesticated woman, fond of her children, and devotedly attached to literary pursuits. Her novels are some of the most approved productions of the day. The tall thin individual, dressed in black, and talking to the lady in the large turban, is Mrs. Goffe's husband. He is good-looking, but somewhat wild, I fear. On the whole, however, he is much liked by the English in Paris—and that, Mr. Pickwick, is saying a great deal."

"Certainly," returned the gentleman thus addressed. "But, pray, who is that short person conversing with the Ambassador? He wears the red riband in his button-hole."

"That is Mr. Beechy, the English lawyer," answered Mr. Scuttle.

"He is counsel to the English Embassy, and has written several works concerning international law, for which King Louis-Philippe conferred upon him the honour of Knighthood. But do you observe that stout gentleman in uniform, with a divers-coloured riband on his breast? That is Sir Robert Still, who formerly served in the Spanish or Portuguese army—I forget which: he is a great favourite at the Tuileries, and has resided a long time in Paris. The person, to whom he is speaking, is General Vansmisson, a gallant Dutch officer, who acquired a considerable degree of reputation and a multitude of wounds, in the Russian campaign. Amongst the group stationed near the door," continued Mr. Scuttle, with a degree of volubility that quite astonished his two attentive listeners, "you may distinguish a short individual, dreadfully marked with the small-pox, and talking with a degree of emphasis that betrays a consciousness of superiority. That is Baron James Rochiel, the great banker: he is doubtless discussing the merits of some beauty, or boasting of favours which were never accorded him, with young Ashby, Lord Pompus's *attaché*."

Mr. Scuttle paused to gather breath, and Mr. Pickwick glanced around him with a countenance wreathed into smiles of the most interesting philanthropy. That great man knew that he was in the society of many of his fellow-countrymen, even in a strange land; he was also aware that he himself was no inconsiderable ornament to the nation whose Ambassador had honoured him with his notice; and in every whisper that passed between the various knots into which the guests were collected, during the interval of leisure succeeding a *quadrille*, he felt convinced that the words which were breathed announced a consciousness of the presence of Samuel Pickwick, Tracy Tupman, and Nathaniel Winkle. His honest heart leapt at the idea; and, in the pride of the moment, he thought within himself, "Even Boozie is now indebted to us for a certain tributary lustre which surrounds him!"

The current of these grand ideas was interrupted by a tray which an over-obsequious water thrust into Mr. Pickwick's somewhat corpulent stomach; so that in the momentary anguish caused by the servant's negligence, that truly immortal man, with a presence of mind that few individuals could boast of, seized hold of a glass of strong negus, and tossed the pleasant mixture off at a draught. So praiseworthy an example could not do otherwise than find disciples; and Messieurs Boozie and Scuttle instantly performed the same ceremony.

Messieurs Tupman and Winkle now rejoined their friends; but to their astonishment Mr. Scuttle stared first at one, and then at the other, in a manner exceedingly embarrassing to the two gentlemen in question.

"Acquaintances of your's, Sir, I presume?" said Mr. Scuttle, appealing to Mr. Pickwick.

"What! do you not recollect them?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, in astonishment not unmixed with anger. "I introduced them as—"

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Scuttle, hastily. "I declare I quite forgot you. A thousand pardons—but you know how absent I am."

Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle of course laughed as heartily as pro-

priety and *po itesse* permitted them; and Mr. Boozie had already begun a story, when Mr. Scuttle again seized upon the conversation as his own exclusive right.

"Dreadful thing, this perpetual absence of mind," said that gentleman: "it gets me into a thousand scrapes. An aunt of mine died a few months ago, and left me a pleasant little fortune. I therefore determined to bury her with meet honours, and issued cards accordingly. But in a moment of distraction, I summoned about thirty guests to my aunt's 'marriage' instead of 'funeral;' and sure enough they came in gay attire and white gloves. I never was so ashamed in my life, I can assure you."

"I can easily fancy that," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Can you?" said Mr. Scuttle. "Well, that's very kind of you. But, I think, gentlemen," he added, addressing himself to Messieurs Tupman and Winkle, "that if you mean to dance again, you had better make haste."

This hint was immediately attended to; and in another minute those illustrious individuals were capering away like Bedlamites.

"Pray, have you been long in France?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, having assured himself, by a cursory glance, that his followers were amusing themselves in a highly creditable and innocent manner.

"Several years, my dear Sir," replied Mr. Scuttle. "I intended to visit Holland, and accordingly embarked in the first steam-vessel that was destined for the Continent, without thinking of enquiring to which country or port it was bound. Conceive my astonishment, when, a light-house and a couple of towers appearing in the distance, the captain assured me, in answer to an enquiry, that we were about to land at Calais. I therefore determined to hasten to Brussels immediately, and thence pass into Holland; but I caused my passport to be signed for Paris by mistake, and did not think it worth while to correct the error."

"And you are fond of Paris, Sir?" said Mr. Boozie, fidgetting his wig: "that is—I mean—you like it."

"Oh! decidedly!" replied Mr. Scuttle: "there is no city in the world to be compared to it. Even this very hotel is equal, in size and splendour, to most of the royal palaces in England. At a future day I shall have the pleasure of escorting you to the Tuileries, and will then leave you to judge for yourselves."

We do not find, in the private notes of Mr. Pickwick, any account of the manner in which Messieurs Tupman and Winkle acquitted themselves in the last *quadrille*, with their fair partners. We therefore presume that nothing extraordinary occurred to interrupt the harmony of the evening, which passed away as most evenings of the same kind usually do.

It was about twelve o'clock when Mr. Scuttle proposed to retire; but this was objected to by Mr. Boozie, and slightly remonstrated against by Mr. Pickwick, those two gentlemen being somewhat anxious to wait for supper.

"Supper!" exclaimed Mr. Scuttle; "at the English Ambassador's house! Oh!—no—never, my dear Sirs—never. Not even if he were as absent as I, would he, in a most extreme state of oblivion, so far forget his prudential and economical arrangements, as to give supper."

"In that case, then, we had better depart, and get some at the hotel," said Mr. Pickwick. "But who is that clumsy-built, vulgar-looking person, to whom Lord Pompus is bowing so obsequiously?"

"Marshal Soult," replied Mr. Scuttle, laconically; "one of the bravest and most celebrated living warriors. None of Napoleon's generals were very famous for any extraordinary degree of refinement in their manners; but they made better soldiers, though, on that account. Did you ever hear the anecdote relative to Marshal Macdonald—a French chief—and the Duke of W*********?"

"No, I have not," returned Mr. Pickwick; "but I should like to hear it amazingly, if it would not be giving you too much trouble."

"Oh! not at all," said the absent gentleman, whose garrulity was unwearied. "Indeed, I am not at all astonished that you have *not* heard it; for the circumstance was tolerably well hushed up at the time, and is only now current amongst a few individuals. But it will just wile away the quarter of an hour's ride home. Let us withdraw, and I will indulge your curiosity in the hackney-coach."

Mr. Pickwick and his companions put themselves under the convoy of Mr. Scuttle, and retreated from the Ambassador's hotel with due order and sobriety. In the space of a minute they all five crowded themselves into a *fiacre;* and as the vehicle rolled onwards to Meurice's Hotel, Mr. Scuttle narrated the following singular anecdote:—

"When the Army of Occupation was here in 18—, the principal officers of the French forces determined to exemplify their good feeling towards the English to the utmost of their power; and it was unanimously resolved, that a grand entertainment should be given, in the Salle Saint Jean, at the Hotel-de-Ville, to the Duke of W********* and his chief supporters. A day was accordingly fixed—the invitations were issued and accepted with delight—and magnificent were the preparations for the banquet. It was supposed that not less than half a million of francs, or about twenty thousand pounds of English sterling money, was expended, in order that the English should be welcomed by the appearance of every splendour, luxury, and comfort that gold could purchase At length the appointed day arrived; and at six o'clock in the evening, the Marshals of France—those warriors who had formerly carried their conquests all over Europe—were assembled in the Salle Saint Jean, to await the arrival of their guests. The elegant uniforms of the Marshals, the gorgeous dresses of the multitudes of ladies who had been invited to add lustre to the scene by their presence, the brilliant display of plate, &c., on the banqueting-table, and the varied liveries of the numerous lacqueys and attendants, formed a scene at once imposing and cheerful. The English officers arrived in good time, and were welcomed with all the cordiality their late enemies could lavish upon them. And in the hearts of those French heroes, there were no jealous—no sinister—no hypocritical sentiments: they had been conquered by the overwhelming superiority of numbers marshalled against them by the Allies, and by the treachery of some of their comrades: they therefore bowed to the force of circumstances, and grasped, with friendly warmth, the out-stretched hands of their gallant foes. Thus all was gaiety, mirth, and good feeling: but the Duke of W********* had not yet made his appearance. The cards of invitation had been issued for six

o'clock; and still he came not. Half-past six o'clock—then seven—and then another hour elapsed without his making his appearance. The feast was for the most part entirely spoilt—the Marshals felt themselves aggrieved—and an air of gloom and despondency was shed on all present. At length the Duke made his appearance, having kept the entertainment waiting two hours and a half. But in what state did he come? He wore his riding surtout-coat, dusty boots, with spurs, and carried a riding-whip in his hand.—'You are somewhat late, my Lord,' said Marshal Macdonald, when the usual ceremonial greetings had taken place.—'Yes,' replied the Duke, without offering an apology; 'I have been riding in the Bois de Boulogne all the afternoon, and was so pleased with the ladies whom I met there, that I found it impossible to tear myself away till now.'—Marshal Macdonald bit his lip, but said nothing. The company seated themselves at the table, and the banquet was forthwith served up; after which there were dancing and music; but the spirits of the guests were depressed by the circumstance already related. The party therefore broke up at an early hour; and as the Duke of W********* was in the act of retiring, Marshal Macdonald whispered a word in his ear.—'My lord duke,' said the French officer, 'you inflicted a gross insult this evening, upon men who had assembled to do you honour. Since, therefore, you are so partial to the Bois de Boulogne, I must request you to meet me there at six o'clock to-morrow morning.'—And what do you think was the result?" enquired Mr. Scuttle, appealing to Mr. Pickwick, as the hackney-coach stopped at the gate of Meurice's Hotel.

"They met, of course," returned that gentleman.

"No such thing," said the absent man: "the challenge was refused—the matter hushed up amongst the English—and there the affair ended. As I before remarked, the anecdote is not generally known; but it still dwells in the memory of a few—and from one of that select number did I learn it. You may, therefore, rely upon its truth."

"And a very interesting little anecdote it is," said Mr. Pickwick, as they all entered the coffee-room, where there was a cheerful fire. "But what should you say to a slight supper?" added that gentleman, with his usual consideration for the wants of others.

"Not for me," returned Mr. Scuttle. "Whenever I eat supper, I invariably walk in my sleep, or have the night-mare. I shall therefore say 'Good night.'"

"Good night," echoed the Pickwickians and Mr. Boozie.

"Good night," cried Mr. Scuttle; and the absent gentleman disappeared in the company of a flat candlestick.

A slight supper of about a dozen hot dishes and a bottle of brandy, with hot water and sugar, were speedily prepared for the hungry travellers; and at a very late hour they sought each his respective chamber. But what was Mr. Pickwick's astonishment, when, just as he was about to step into bed, he discovered another tenant in that delicious abode; and, on farther inspection, became aware of the pleasing fact, that the absent gentleman was fast asleep between the identical sheets to which he was about to consign his own illustrious limbs! Mr. Pickwick started back in silent horror, and glanced hastily round the room, when other equally agreeable objects met his

view. The absent man had swept up the ashes in the grate with Mr. Pickwick's hair-brush—he had stopped up a broken window with a pair of Mr. Pickwick's tights—he had filled Mr. Pickwick's best hat with water, and stood his rush-light in it—and lastly, he had put out the wax-candle with Mr. Pickwick's night-cap.

Human nature could not endure this complication of injuries. It seemed that Mr. Pickwick was destined never to enjoy an uninterrupted night's rest in the Hotel Meurice. Philanthropy—leniency—mercy—all were forgotten: Mr. Pickwick tucked up his shirt sleeves with the utmost haste, and forthwith commenced so desperate an attack on the ribs of the absent gentleman, that sleep soon forsook his eyes, and, fancying himself a prize-fighter, he jumped manfully out of bed, and returned, with compound interest, the favours Mr. Pickwick was so liberally and profusely bestowing on him. In the words of a celebrated modern poet*—

> " the battle's rage
> Was like the strife that billows wage,
> Where Orinoco in his pride
> Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
> But 'gainst broad ocean dashes far
> A rival sea of roaring war;
> While, in ten thousand eddies driven,
> The foaming surges fly to heaven,
> And the pale pilot seeks in vain
> Where rolls the river, where the main;"—

and in all probability the desperate conflict would have been continued half-an-hour longer, had not Mr. Boozie suddenly rushed into the room—for Messieurs Tupman and Winkle prudently acted as listeners instead of operators—and separated the combatants, for which unthankful act of kindness Mr. Pickwick would have pitched into him also, had not exhaustion compelled that extraordinary man, whose exploits in war are as remarkable as his proceedings in matters of peace, to sink into a chair. Mr. Scuttle took advantage of this cessation of hostilities, to gather up his clothes and decamp to his own chamber; and Mr. Boozie, having wished his friend a good night's rest, also retired to his apartment, while Mr. Pickwick remained alone, and upon the chair, gazing with a species of grim satisfaction on the objects around, like Marius sitting amongst the ruins of Carthage.

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. WELLER'S OPINION OF MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM.—A MORNING'S DEBAUCH, AND THE WAY TO DISCOUNT A BILL.—THE DEGRADATION OF A SOLDIER ON THE PLACE VENDÔME.—THE MARSEILLAISE.—A COMMUNICATION FROM M. DUMONT.—FRENCH POLITENESS.

In the meantime, Mr. Weller had amused himself, in imitation of the

* Sir Walter Scott.—" Rokeby."

example so laudably set him by his venerated master. He had presided at a Pork-chop Club, over an exclusive and fashionable party of English gentlemen, who, for the most part, were embellished with ten days' shirts, and stockings of a like antiquity; and as the meeting was held at a select tavern, the domestic economy and glorious uncleanliness of which were subjected to the dominion of a drunken Irish landlord, there had been no want of license in the use of the "creature." It is not, therefore, astonishing if Mr. Weller were somewhat late in his diurnal, or rather matinal visit, to his master's room on the morning that immediately followed the events so faithfully detailed in the preceding chapter.

"What's o'clock, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Ten, Sir," replied that gentleman, laconically.

"Ten!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, sitting up in his bed: "you don't mean to say so."

"I vosn't aweer that you'd any wery partickler bisness to transact this mornin', Sir," said Mr. Weller, "or I'd ha' called you afore. The fact is, Sir, I pre-sided at a wery gen-teel swarry last evening; and I raly don't know how it where, but either the liquor vosn't wery veak, or my head wery strong, and so—"

"And so you were rather tipsy, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, coming to his dependant's aid with the kindness of disposition that so essentially characterized all his trivial as well as his important deeds.

"Rayther, Sir," returned Mr. Weller. "But him as okkipies the cheer at them public meetin's is alvays obligated to drink more than the rest; and that's comin' it a little too strong, as the old 'ooman remarked ven the doctor offered her the seventeenth pill in the course of the hour."

"I purpose calling on Mr. Crashem to-day," said Mr. Pickwick, after a pause during which he emerged from his bed.

"Hem!" said Mr. Weller, dubiously, and leisurely desisting from his occupation of playing with his copper watch-chain.

"What did you say, Sam?" cried his master.

"I merely said 'hem,' Sir," returned the valet, drily.

"And why did you say 'hem?'" demanded Mr. Pickwick, as he applied an immense lather-brush to his expressive face.

"Cos, Sir," answered Mr. Weller, "he ain't no good, I'm wery much afeerd. His name's veared out, the vaggibund! on my books, as the Sheriff's officer said ven he refused to take Bill Styles's bail for the gen'leman in trouble."

"I'm sorry to hear you talk in this way, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, casting a solemn glance at his faithful attendant.

"Can't help von's thoughts, Sir," continued Mr. Weller: "an' my o-pinion o' Mr. Crashem is, that he's like a reg'lar dealer in deceptions, in a hallegorical sense."

"A story-teller, I suppose, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Just like von o' them chaps as sells brass orninints for gold vons," explained Mr. Weller.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Pickwick, who probably more than half suspected that his sagacious servant was not far wrong. "But he is a stranger in a strange land, Sam—he has no friends—"

"Exactly vot the costermonger re-marked, ven he volloped his

donkey, Sir," ejaculated Mr. Weller, by way of illustrating his master's observation.

"I therefore shall not desert him," continued Mr. Pickwick. "But you had better go down stairs, now—Sam—and order breakfast," added that great observer of the human race, with unwonted deliberation: "I shall follow immediately—" a proceeding, which, in the opinion of a malicious commentator, might originate an idea that Mr. Pickwick was very desirous of putting a stop to a conversation in which his valet had the better side of the argument.

Shortly after breakfast, the little party was joined by Mr. Tims, who had passed the whole of the two preceding days with his particular friend Mr. Adolphus Crashem, in the very agreeable and quiet chamber occupied by that gentleman, next to a stack of chimneys on the top story of the New Prison. Mr. Tims gladly accepted Mr. Pickwick's invitation to accompany him and his companions to that select menagerie of caged specimens of the human species, and declared that the call would be the more agreeable, as Mr. Crashem had succeeded in getting a bill discounted the day before.

"A bill!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick; "and for what amount?"

"Eighty pounds, I believe," returned Mr. Tims, with a sly laugh. "But, come along—and you shall see the exchange our friend has made—he giving a scrap of paper with some writing on it, and the money-broker, who, by the bye, is as excellent and worthy a Jew as ever wrote himself down 'Moses,' supplying him with one-third in cash, and the remainder in a variety of useful goods and effects."

The curiosity of the Pickwickians was sensibly awakened by these mysterious hints; and all haste was made to reach the prison. Accordingly in three quarters of an hour, or thereabouts, Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Boozie, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Tims, stood at Mr. Adolphus Crashem's door, on the panels of which the first named gentleman knocked somewhat loudly.

"Come in, you blackguards, you!" cried a loud voice which was immediately recognised as a portion of Mr. Crashem's worldly possessions, in spite of the thickness and hesitation with which the words were articulated. Mr. Pickwick, thus adjured, threw the door wide open, and advanced a few paces into the room, followed by his companions in the rear. But there he stopped short, as if suddenly petrified, and thus forcibly rivetted to the spot—for most singular was the scene upon which he had suddenly burst. And this was it.

On the table was a pleasing variety of bottles of all shapes and colours; some half full, others entirely empty, and tastefully ranged around an immense hand-bason in which there still remained a portion of a certain liquid that essentially resembled rum-punch. These arrangements were backed by cigars, and the ashes of cigars in profusion—a lighted candle, with a gigantic wick—and all the *et ceteras* that indicate the enactment of a thorough debauch. In one corner of the room was a tremendous pile of household goods, amongst which the curious eye of Mr. Pickwick detected—upon a rough calculation—about three dozen mops, a dozen coal-scuttles, six warming-pans, six or eight dozen toasting-forks, an entire army of boot-jacks, and numberless other articles usually appropriated in small quantities to domestic uses.

But where was the owner of the apartment thus stored? Mr. Crashem was seated upon a chair in which he with difficulty maintained his balance; a cigar was in his mouth, a tumbler of punch in his hand, and his eye contemplated, with a species of vacant satisfaction, the mops and brooms that relieved the sight in the perspective of his chamber. Mr. Lipman was seated upon the floor with his back to the wall, being too much intoxicated to remain stationary on a more convenient seat; and the eternal wooden pipe was performing for him its wonted and agreeable office of emitting volumes of smoke. Add to this description, the person of Mr. Jopling, who was quietly snoring away under the table, where he had fallen an hour before, and the interesting scene is complete. The three friends, upon the strength of the discount, had prudently determined "to make a night of it;" and they had done so with a vengeance: indeed, Mr. Crashem looked very much like a man who intended to make a quiet day of it also.

"Ah! Pick—Pick—wick, how d'ye do, old---chap?" enquired Mr. Adolphus Crashem, glancing vacantly from the household furniture towards his visitor, and still dubious whether it really were Mr. Pickwick or not. "How d'ye do, though?" he added, after a moment, which he wisely employed in a strict scrutiny of the person of our great hero: "pray, sit down—and do as we do. I can't get up—to —to welcome you; for if I did—I should imitate that—that—confounded drunken dog's ex—ex—ex—ample!"—and with these words, Mr. Crashem applied the heel of his boot in a truly facetious and friendly manner to Mr. Jopling's ribs.

"Keep up the spree, gentlemen, say I!" exclaimed Mr. Lipman, whose powers of articulation were unimpaired; and in order to assist the hilarity of the morning's entertainment, he very obligingly commenced the first verse of a highly pathetic and affecting song, the words of which ran nearly as follows:—

"A pot of good porter fill—fill up for me,
Give those who prefer it blue ruin;
But whate'er be the lush, it a bumper must be,
For we're serious in what we are doin'!"

And so indeed they were, God knows; for at the conclusion of this verse, Messieurs Crashem and Lipman laughed heartily, and drank off the contents of their glasses, with a kind and patronising nod to Mr. Pickwick, who stood a silent spectator of this extraordinary scene.

"Keep up the game!" cried Mr. Crashem. "Hooray!"

"Hooray!" echoed Mr. Lipman; and he immediately proceeded to chaunt the second verse of his select air.

"And now that our grog and cigars are begun,
And all our best feelings possess us,
Let us drink our own health, and be d——d to the one
Who refuses to join in 'God bless us!
God bless us!'"

"Excellent!" said Mr. Crashem, approvingly. "But—I say—old fellow," he added, addressing himself to Mr. Pickwick, "you don't seem to—to pay any atten—tion to my—mops!"

"Nor those lovely boot-jacks," observed Mr. Lipman, in deep indignation at so highly culpable a neglect on the part of the visitor.

This was more than Mr. Pickwick could bear; for be it recollected, that our philanthropic hero had come to visit—in his own beautiful and expressive language—"a stranger in a strange land;" and on his arrival he found the unfortunate and unfriended object of his kind solicitude so exceedingly tipsy, that he scarcely recognised the individuals who crowded at the door of his chamber. Mr. Pickwick shook his head, and held his peace: but he also turned upon his heel, beckoned his companions to follow him, and retired in disgust from the prison, attended by Messieurs Boozie, Tupman, and Winkle, Mr. Tims having preferred to remain with Mr. Adolphus Crashem, "just to see that he didn't get into mischief," as he declared, but really with the praise-worthy intention of assisting at the orgies.

When the hackney-coach, in which Mr. Pickwick and his three companions were quietly ensconced, arrived at that end of the Rue de la Paix which forms the commencement of the Place Vendôme, the driver suddenly pulled up his horses, and thereby caused Mr. Pickwick to thrust his head out of the window in order to ascertain the reason of the delay. The Place Vendôme was crowded with troops and with the spectators of that which was going forward; and the united bands of a couple of regiments were assembled together round the base of Napoleon's Column.

"Here is something worth looking at," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, when he had taken a long survey of the soldiers and the multitude of unwashed aforesaid.

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Tupman; "let us dismiss the coach, and see what's going on."

This proposition was immediately acceded to, and the party soon added four more to the number of the spectators that thronged the northern avenue to the Place Vendôme. Around the Place were two entire regiments drawn up in well-disciplined array; and a most exhilarating sight it was. Mr. Pickwick, with a gleam of satisfaction on his countenance, stood gracefully on his tip-toes, and glanced along the serried ranks of warriors, as if he were their chief; and even Mr. Winkle felt a momentary glow of ardour as he scanned the successors to those heroes who had carried their conquests from one extremity of Europe to the other, under the command of him around whose statue a few of the champions of France were now assembled.

Fortunately for the party, Mr. Tupman suddenly recognised, at a little distance, his *quondam* systematic acquaintance, Mr. Hook Walker; and in the course of a minute that gentleman was busily occupied in explaining certain matters with which Mr. Pickwick and his friends would otherwise have remained unacquainted.

"It is a degradation, my dear Sir," said Mr. Hook Walker, slowly suffering the words to issue from his lips: "and a degradation," continued Mr. Walker, "is this. When a French soldier has been guilty of some extreme act of turpitude and delinquency, it is a part of the French system to turn him out of the army. A parade is formed, as you see it now—the criminal is conducted to the centre of the square or circle, whichever it may happen to be, formed by the soldiers, and there his buttons are cut off, his shoulder-straps torn away, and

his side-arms ignominiously wrested from his person. He is then drummed out of his regiment; and if his crime be very great, he is frequently handed over to other authorities to be tried and punished for his misdemeanours."

"Indeed," said Mr. Pickwick; "and, pray, do you happen to know for what the poor fellow in this instance is to be degraded?"

"He is a republican," replied Mr. Walker. "He belongs to several liberal unions—he has mutinied against his officers—and, in addition to his other crimes, has adopted the system of never going to bed for the last eighteen months without singing the *Marseillaise* from beginning to end."

"And, pray, what is the *Marseillaise?*" enquired Mr. Winkle, wondering within himself whether it were a drinking or a sporting song.

"A National Air, my dear Sir," answered Mr. Walker, with a smile of pity at the ignorance of his acquaintance. "I have a translation of it at this very minute in my pocket: it was given to me by a young English friend a few days ago; for you must know that it is a part of my system to make myself acquainted with all these matters."

"And an excellent system it is," said Mr. Pickwick. "But would you oblige me with a sight of the translation you allude to?"

"Certainly," returned Mr. Walker. "Are you particularly anxious to see the degradation?"

"Not now," rejoined Mr. Pickwick, "since you have so kindly explained the nature of it. And, perhaps, you are in a hurry?"

"My system does not allow me to remain long in the same place," said Mr. Walker. "If you will accompany me to the Café Virginie in the Rue de la Paix close by, I will read the translation to you with much pleasure."

The offer was immediately accepted with thanks; and on their arrival at the Café, Mr. Walker opened the business by ordering an immense bowl of "Bishop," or burnt punch. When he had refreshed himself, according to the rules of a particular section in his system, with a couple of tumblers of the exhilarating fluid, he drew a piece of paper from one of the pockets of his black kerseymere unwhisperables, and read therefrom the following translation of the most popular National Air in France.

LA MARSEILLAISE.

Sons of heroes, fam'd in story,
Onward march to death or glory;
For see, the foemen's standard waves
O'er fields that soon must be their graves!
Hear ye the clatter of their arms,
Their shouts portending dire alarms?
Eager for slaughter, on they press
To make your children fatherless!
Then let each warrior grasp his vengeful brand,
And shed th' invader's blood to fertilize the land

Wherefore to our peaceful coasts
Rush those sanguinary hosts?

For whom have they prepar'd the chains
That now they drag o'er verdant plains?—
Children of France! to us they come—
Those chains are forg'd to fix our doom!
Just heav'n! that such disgrace should fall
Upon the free-born sons of Gaul!
Then let each warrior grasp his vengeful brand,
And shed th' invader's blood to fertilize the land!

What! shall we, afraid of war,
Take from tyrant hands the law?
What! shall a foreign cohort's pride
Intimidate our warriors tried?
Great God! our necks can never be
Subject to despots' tyranny;
Nor shall th' invaders of the state
Decide upon its people's fate!
Then let each warrior grasp his vengeful brand,
And shed th' invader's blood to fertilize the land!

Tremble, chiefs perfidious all—
On your heads our curses fall!
Tremble! your projects, soon made vain,
Their merited return will gain;
For France has arm'd her serried bands,
And plac'd her safety in their hands;
So that if hundreds fall to-day,
To-morrow thousands join th' array.
Then let each warrior grasp his vengeful brand,
And shed th' invader's blood to fertilize the land!

In the darkling battle's strife,
Soldier! spare your victim's life,
When, arm'd against you in the field,
Feeble and weak, he cries—"I yield!"
Him may'st thou spare! But, to the grave
Shalt thou pursue the chief who gave
Such dire example to the rest
That tear for food their mother's breast!
Then let each warrior grasp his vengeful brand,
And shed th' invader's blood to fertilize the land!

Sacred fervour—patriot flame,
Urge us on to deeds of fame!
Freedom! assist the deadly blow
That we direct against the foe!
Conquest! may we to war be led,
Thy banners amply o'er us spread;
And may the tyrant hosts retreat,
Or beg for mercy at our feet!
Then let each hero grasp the vengeful brand,
And shed th' invader's blood to fertilize the land!

"Will you allow me to copy that admirable air?" said Mr. Pickwick with a smile of satisfaction, as Mr. Hook Walker laid the paper on the table, and ladled himself out another bumper of "Bishop."

"With pleasure," returned that gentleman. "Civility is a material point in my system;" and he might have added that thirst was too,

if one could judge by the manner in which he swallowed the strong burnt punch.

Mr. Pickwick accordingly transcribed the *Marseillaise* in the pages of his private note-book; and then Mr. Walker recollected that he had an appointment at a hotel close by.

"The fact is," said that systematic individual, "I am a member of a very useful club or association, which meets once a month to transact business and audit accounts; and this is the day of *rendez-vous*. I would not be absent for the world."

"Might I inquire the name of the club, Sir?" said Mr. Pickwick, again opening his note-book, and preparing to write.

"Decidedly," answered Mr. Walker, deliberately filling the tumblers round; "a desire to give information whenever I can, is one of the most important principles of my system."

"And the name—" said Mr. Pickwick, with his pencil in his hand.

"Is," continued Mr. Walker, "'The-Anti-getting-into-debt-amongst-the-French,-so-as-not-to-give-them-cause-to-suspect-the-honour-and-integrity-of-the-English-abroad-Association.'"

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, scribbling a few hieroglyphics on the pages of his note-book, and then closing it with unusual precipitation. "And a very useful society, I dare say it is," he added drily.

"I once knew the president of a society," began Mr. Boozie; then, suddenly recollecting himself, he said, "Oh! no—I beg your pardon—'twas the secretary, when I think of it—"

"Ah! who called me?" interrupted Mr. Walker, starting from his chair, and gazing anxiously through the window. "Oh! I see—my friend, Mr. What's-his-name. One moment, gentlemen;"—and with this apology, Mr. Hook Walker hastened out of the Café, intimating a second time that he should return as speedily as possible, and requesting his friends to wait for him, as it was not a part of his system to stay long at the association with the facile and brief name, when his time could be more agreeably employed. It is true that Mr. Tupman had a lurking suspicion in his mind that Mr. Walker would not keep his promise; he, however, held his peace; and it was only at the expiration of an hour, that Mr. Pickwick ventured to suggest the propriety of retiring, as it did not appear probable that Mr. Hook Walker would again favour them with his presence on that occasion. The little party accordingly returned to Meurice's Hotel.

"Gen'leman bin here, Sir," said Mr. Weller, who, from lurking idly at the gate, had relapsed into that predicament of activity, which was necessary to convey him to his master's apartment.

"Who was it, Sam?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, seating himself by the side of a wood fire, which seemed to be as obstinately inclined as ever three dead logs with one cubic inch of hot cinder between them ever yet did.

"Johnny Darmy, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, in a certain epigrammatic style into which he occasionally relapsed.

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick; "and did he leave any message?"—for the intelligent hero of this narrative, with his usual comprehensive powers, immediately suspected the name of his visitor.

"Left this 'ere note, Sir," answered Mr. Weller, "and said he vouldn't take no refusal votsoever; vich vos precisely the obserwa-

tion made by the mas'er chimbley-sweep, ven he pushed the little tiny boy up the chimbley."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick, with a shudder: "are chimney-sweepers so cruel as all that, Sam?"

"Them and costermongers, Sir," replied Mr. Weller, "is the most hard-hartedest brutes a-livin', if ve ex-cept the chaps as drives the dog-carts. None on 'em ever ends any-veres, save at the gallows."

"Very strange!" cried Mr. Pickwick, opening the note, and perusing its contents from the date to the signature.

"What does it say?" inquired Mr. Winkle, when he observed the bland and placid smile that played upon the lips of his leader.

"It regards Tupman, principally," said Mr. Pickwick with a little hesitation. "But as it would be ridiculous, Tupman," continued he, "to keep the affair any longer secret from our mutual friends, I may as well take this opportunity of acquainting them with the villainous robbery that was committed upon you. Sam, you may withdraw."

Mr. Tupman bowed submissively as Mr. Pickwick addressed him, and Mr. Weller forthwith obeyed the imperial ukase that dismissed him from the presence. Mr. Pickwick then made a few preliminary and lucidly explanatory observations, for the especial edification of Messieurs Boozie and Winkle; at the termination of which he informed his audience that the note he held in his hand was from their mutual friend Dumont, and that its contents, expunged of all grammatical errors—it being written in English—were as follows:—

"My dear Sir,

"Information having been privately given at the Prefecture de Police, that a most audacious and extensive robbery was committed on the person of Mr. Tupman, a few evenings ago, I am inclined to think that the gold watch may probably be recovered. In order to advise with you on this subject, I took the liberty of calling this morning, but was not fortunate enough to find you at home. I shall therefore do myself the pleasure of waiting upon you, if convenient, at eleven precisely, to-morrow morning, and hope to render you an essential service, at the same time that I shall gratify your curiosity in search of useful information, by conducting you and your friends to the office of no less a person than the immortal Vidocq himself!

"A Monsieur, Monsieur, Very truly your's,
"Pickwick, &c., &c. DUMONT."

This communication instilled a considerable quantity of joy into the hearts of the four gentlemen, as they seated themselves at the dinner-table, in obedience to the summons of their appetites and of a waiter simultaneously; and the evening was agreeably passed in the pleasing anticipation of the novel adventure which awaited them for the ensuing morning.

"Wery queer nation this is sure-ly, Sir," said Mr. Weller, when he attended his master in that gentleman's bed-room.

"So I perceive, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, putting on his night-cap.

"Ran agin a gen'leman this mornin', Sir," continued Mr Weller, descriptively, "an' nearly knocked him head-over-heels into the gutter. Vos just a-goin' for to offer a ap-pology, ven he turns

round, takes off his hat—an' a wery rum tile it where too—and makes me sich a uncommon polite bow as never I see afore. The chap, it vos wery perceptible to see vithout barnacles, vos a-begging my pardon. '*Pardong*,' cried the fernomenon vith a inexpressible grin; and he valked avay.—'Vell,' says I to myself, 'you're a nice un, you air, as the nobleman observed to the roast sucking-pig.'—But it's a part o' their edication, Sir," added Mr. Weller.

"I suppose it is, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, seating himself before the fire, in order to give his follower an opportunity of expressing his opinions on France and the French.

"But that ain't all, Sir," continued Mr. Weller. "A wery rainy day vos the day afore yesterday, in the mornin'; and, as I valked vonce up and down in them gardens opposite, I sees a gen'leman meet a lady and stop her. Gen'leman had no numberellar—lady had a wery tidy von. Just at the moment a smart shower begins to fall; but the gen'leman takes off his hat, holds it in his hand, and never wentures to put it on till the lady vos ten yards distant. I'm sure they stood there a-talkin' for more than a minit; and if the gen'leman didn't get cold, I'm a Dutchman, as the king o' the Sangvich Islands said."

"Very curious indeed," observed Mr. Pickwick, approvingly.

"So it is, Sir," said Mr. Weller with a smile of triumph. "I hates to speak ill o' my own country," he added in a low tone of voice—"it's a thing I can't a-bear to do, but I must, as the sassage-maker observed ven he cut up his fav'rite tom-cat; and all I can say is, that the French is much more politer and curtious than the English is. Besides, the wery tradesmen and even the vaiters their-selves is as vell-behaved and gen-teel as our English gen'lemen."

"Well—perhaps you are right, Sam," returned Mr. Pickwick after a pause. "This never struck me before; mind I make a note of it to-morrow morning."

"I vill not forget, Sir," cried Mr. Weller cheerfully; "an' if so be as you von't, vy—then I must do it myself; vich vos the remark made by the bishop ven his curate vos too ill to preach the sermon."

Mr. Pickwick relieved his faithful domestic from all apprehension, by assuring him that it was his intention to collate every remarkable anecdote and opinion it should be his good fortune to hear during his stay in France, and publish the result of his researches on his return to England at a future day. Mr. Weller's countenance brightened up, and his spirits and Mr. Pickwick rose at the same time—the former in the breast of their proprietor, and the latter from his easy chair. The soothing luxuries of an inviting pile of mattrasses were then courted and won by the last named gentleman; and in that blissful state shall we leave him for the present in order to renew our acquaintance with additional pleasure in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. PICKWICK FORMS THE ACQUAINTANCE OF A POET.—THE CHORUS OF THE FOUR WINDS.—MR. BOOZIE.—A VISIT TO A CELEBRATED FRENCHMAN, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Mr. Pickwick slept long and placidly; and those airy nothings which filled his extensive imagination during the night, were of a most felicitous and exhilarating character. To descend to vulgar parlance, he had dreamt of the renown he had already acquired, and of the future fame that would attend his memory. His countenance was therefore a map of smiles when he walked into the breakfast-parlour with all the consciousness of greatness and importance; but, to his surprise and momentary annoyance—seeing that the frosty air of the morning had sharpened his appetite—his friends had not yet emerged from their dormitories. The room was not, however, untenanted when Mr. Pickwick entered it; for, in a large easy chair near the cheerful wood-fire, sate an individual, who rose upon his two legs the moment his vision was magnetically attracted by the appearance of him who could be no other than Samuel Pickwick, Esq., himself.

The stranger was a tall, thin, sallow-faced individual, with light-red hair and a very pointed nose. We do not say that his features were not commanding; but many fastidious people entertain a strong antipathy to a countenance deeply indented by the ravages of the small-pox; while others have violent predilections against bad teeth. There is, moreover, a prejudice (it cannot be denied) against a cock-eye, inasmuch as the possession of two straight optics has generally been deemed necessary to the distinctness of one glance. Setting aside these small defects, no more serious charge can justly be brought against the beauty of the stranger, who, clad in deep black, and with a large roll of papers under his arm, started into life from the easy chair, as aforesaid.

"I beg you a thousand pardons, Mr. Pickwick," said the stranger, in a solemn tone of voice, and with a low bow; "but the fame of your philanthropy and literary acquirements has reached me in my humble retreat—*pauper domus*—you see, and—"

"Pray sit down, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, somewhat flattered by the stranger's discourse. "And now, may I ask with whom I have the pleasure of conversing?"

"My name, Mr. Pickwick," returned the stranger, relapsing into the easy chair, and untying the string that circumvented his papers, "is also well known to fame. You have doubtless heard of Septimus Chitty, the poet?"

The stranger suffered a cunning smile to curl his lip, while Pickwick cleared his throat with a "Hem!" and smiled also.

"Ah!" pursued Mr. Chitty, "I see I am *now* no stranger to you, Mr. Pickwick. But—*nunquam animus id*—never mind that: let me briefly state the object of my visit."

Mr. Chitty paused to gather breath, bestowed another smile upon Mr. Pickwick, and continued as follows.

"You are doubtless acquainted with the numerous poems I have from time to time been publishing in the *Tintinnabuli Vita*, 'Bell's Life'—the *Johannes Taurus*, 'John Bull'—*Tempora*, or 'Times'—the *Terra*, 'Globe'—the *Nuncius*, 'Courier'—and a variety of other English Journals. I was also poet-laureate to a *liber et facilis*—or free-and-easy club—during my residence in London: so you perceive, Mr. Pickwick, that I *am* some-body after all."

The gentleman thus appealed to, nodded a bland assent, wondering at the same time to what point his companion was about to direct his attention.

"I was, however, obliged to leave my ungrateful country," continued Mr. Septimus Chitty, with a sigh from his poetic bosom, "on account of events over which I had no controul."

"Political turmoils, I suppose?" suggested Mr. Pickwick, willing to relieve a fellow-creature from the pain of a disagreeable explanation.

"No, Sir—debts," added Mr. Chitty, wiping a tear from his eye with the sleeve of his Parnassian garment.

"Ah!—I see," said Mr. Pickwick, drily.

"And my unfeeling creditors," elucidated the injured man, naturally overcome by a deep sense of his wrongs, "compelled me to exile myself from that land which will one day be as proud of a Chitty as it now is of a Pickwick."

Mr. Pickwick again acknowledged the compliment by a low bow; and whether his heart were softened by the narrative of his companion's sufferings, or his pride flattered by that gentleman's discourse, is uncertain; but his countenance was again wreathed in smiles of philanthropy, and Mr. Chitty was thus encouraged to proceed.

"To make a long story short," said the poet, unfolding his papers, "I am reduced to the necessity of procuring my livelihood—*suore frontis*—by the sweat of my brow; or in other words, by the exercise of those talents which God has endowed me with. Here, Sir, is one of the most charming and erudite productions—a Drama, Sir—that was ever offered to the inspection of man."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, in great delight.

"Yes, my dear Sir," pursued Mr. Chitty. "But, would you believe it? I sent this glorious composition to the manager of a principal theatre in London—and, with shame be it spoken! it was no go —*nullus eo!*"

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"It is a fact, my dear Sir—*factum est*," asseverated the exiled poet. "But in order to induce you to grant the request I shall presently put to your generosity, I must intrude a little upon your time, and solicit your attention to the two or three first pages of my Drama."

"With great pleasure," said Mr. Pickwick." But, here are my friends—and we have not yet breakfasted. Perhaps you will join us?"

Mr. Chitty respectfully declined the invitation, and generously offered to read the first act of the Drama while Mr. Pickwick and his friends discussed their morning's repast. This proposition was cheerfully agreed to; and an introduction having been effected between the poet and Messieurs Tupman, Winkle, and Boozie, the suggested

arrangement was immediately put into effect, the four inmates of the hotel seating themselves at the breakfast-table, and Mr. Chitty preparing himself to read the commencement of the most glorious Drama ever yet submitted to the inspection and opinion of individuals so capable of judging of its merits as the aforesaid audience. It was, indeed, a beautiful sight—Mr. Pickwick engaged in the devastation of eggs and muffins, an example that was imitated by his friends to the very life—and the poet, his "eye" (for the other was frequently invisible) "in a fine frenzy rolling," ensconced in the easy chair with the mystic papers in his hands!

When the audience was all attention, Mr. Chitty opened the first leaf of his book, and began as follows:—

"THE CREATION,

A DRAMA."

He then turned over another leaf, and read the title-page:—

"THE CREATION,

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS,

BY SEPTIMUS CHITTY, ESQ.,

Author of divers Poems, Professor of Latin, &c."

The Poet took breath once more, turned over another leaf, and continued in the ensuing manner:—

"THE CREATION.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Four Winds.
Chaos.
The Spirits of the Earth,
the Air, Fire, and Water.
Man and Woman."

This page being thus disposed of, the next was immediately resorted to, and the author burst at once *in medias res*:—

"THE CREATION,

ACT I.

SCENE, INFINITE SPACE."

"Eh!" said Mr. Pickwick, dubiously. "Where did you say the scene was laid, Sir?"

"In infinite space, to be sure," answered Mr. Chitty. "Capital idea, isn't it? Such a scene for stage effect!"

"So I should think," observed Mr. Pickwick, considerably enlightened: "but pray proceed."

"I will," responded Mr. Chitty; "*et nullus error*—and no mistake.—But where was I? Oh!—

SCENE, INFINITE SPACE.

Enter the Four Winds.

CHORUS OF WINDS.

FIRST WIND.—Birr—r—r—r—r—r—r.
SECOND WIND.—Siss—s—s—s—s—s—s.
THIRD WIND.—Whi—ou—u—u—u—u—u.
FOURTH WIND.—Puff—f—f—f—f—f—f."

And thus did the erudite Mr. Septimus Chitty set himself to work to imitate the four winds. Human nature was not proof against this display of his vocal powers: Mr. Pickwick, with the prudence which invariably characterized all his actions, crammed an entire muffin into his mouth to suppress the rising laughter; but Messieurs Boozie, Tupman, and Winkle—whose imaginations, lacking the fertility which marked that of their great leader, did not suggest any immediate means of restraining the hilarity of their risible muscles—gave vent to a long, loud, and simultaneous shout of laughter, which might have been heard, and very probably was, in the street below. The book fell from the hands of the discomfited poet, just at the interesting moment when he was about to introduce his favourite character, "Chaos," upon the scene; and his countenance became livid with anger.

"If you mean to insult me, gentlemen," at length exclaimed the irate Mr. Septimus Chitty, "tell me so, and I'll hasten to cut my stick—*scindere baculum*—before I become absolutely intrusive;"—and the poet drew himself up with the conscious innocence of a highly injured man.

"My dear Sir," began Mr. Pickwick, "pray compose yourself. I am sure that neither myself nor friends intended to offer the slightest insult."

Mr. Chitty was actually choking with indignation.

"Heavens! take care," exclaimed Mr. Tupman, afraid of the consequences of his almost irrepressible mirth. "Do compose yourself, as my friend Pickwick said—and try a little drop of wine or brandy-and-water."

"Brandy and water!" shouted the still angry Mr. Septimus Chitty, somewhat softening, however, at Mr. Tupman's courteous offer.

The waiter was accordingly summoned, and the necessary order immediately given.

"Hot or cold, Sir?" enquired the domestic.

"'Hot with,' *callidum cum*—or 'cold without,' *frigidum sine*," said Mr. Chitty, deliberately, as he mused over the waiter's demand: "why—if I must decide—hot, *with* sugar, then;"—and the poet at length deigned to smile, as he picked up his manuscripts.

"Your Drama is exceedingly interesting, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, by way of soothing the unfortunate Mr. Chitty's grief, while that gentleman himself imbibed, with evident relish, a reeking glass of the *callidum cum*.

"I flatter myself that it would make a good acting play, Mr. Pickwick," observed Mr. Chitty, very gravely: "but on another occasion

I shall have the pleasure of reading a little more to you. Joking apart, however, what do you really think of the opening scene?"

"Very fine," returned Mr. Pickwick. "But I fancy you have written some other poems, have you not, Sir?"

"Bless you!" exclaimed Mr. Septimus Chitty; "why—I have had as much as three pounds seventeen and sixpence at a time from Warren—and very frequently, two sovereigns from Rowland."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick, quite delighted.

"Oh! yes," persisted Mr. Chitty. "Have you never heard my truly original song, explanatory of the origin of hair-trunks?"

Mr. Pickwick did not for one moment suffer himself to be influenced by any sentiment of vain glory or conceit: he therefore, with unexampled candour and frankness, confessed his ignorance of the ode in question, and, to demonstrate his sincerity, requested Mr. Chitty to repeat it. The poet nodded an assent, and recited, with befitting solemnity and grandeur of emphasis, the following remarkable lines.

THE ORIGIN OF HAIR-TRUNKS.

In a carpenter's work-shop a box of deal wood
For many long years had in idleness stood:—
Neglected and dusty, the old piece of lumber
Seem'd destin'd for naught save the shelves to encumber.

But fortunes may vary. A servant one day
Call'd in at the shop, a few shillings to pay,
And thoughtlessly placed near the box on the shelf
A bottle of oil he had bought for himself.

A couple of urchins, on mischief intent,
To that very same spot in their gambollings went;
And, breaking the bottle, they sprinkled the oil
On a box that they fancied no frolic could spoil.

Next morning—Oh! strange—on the shelf, what was there?
A beautiful trunk cover'd over with hair!—
Its duty, indeed, the Macassar had done,
Produced by the genius of Rowland and Son.

"You don't mean to say that that's true, do you?" enquired Mr. Winkle, when Mr. Chitty had thus brought his composition to a conclusion.

"As true as you are sitting there, Sir," responded the poet, in a tone of mingled indignation and contempt—the former to think that so very natural an incident should be for a moment questioned; and the latter on account of Mr. Winkle's ignorance. The matter was set at rest by Mr. Boozie, who declared that he was well acquainted with the carpenter himself; and as he forgot—for the first time in his life—to contradict his assertion five minutes after he had given utterance to it, no doubt remained as to the truth of the tale. Mr. Chitty therefore rose considerably in the esteem of the sagacious travellers whom he thus gratuitously entertained.

"I think," said Mr. Pickwick, after a pause, "that you had some request to make to me, concerning the Drama of which you just now favoured us with a portion?"

"I shall leave that for another time, my dear Sir," answered Mr. Chitty, rising and preparing to take leave. "All I had to say, was relative to the editing of the work; but—for the present—since the *chorus* strikes your fancy—we will postpone any conversation on that head. Gentlemen—*bonus dies*—good day!"—and having repeated these words three or four times, Mr. Septimus Chitty, finding that he had nothing more to do with Mr. Pickwick's business, went about his own.

Mr. Septimus Chitty had scarcely left the room five minutes, when his visit was succeeded by that of the Gendarme, who was dressed in plain clothes for the momentous occasion he had in view. We need scarcely say that the excellent-hearted Frenchman was received with fitting cordiality by Mr. Pickwick and his friends, or that the utmost alacrity in preparing for departure was demonstrated by those gentlemen so soon as M. Dumont had specifically stated his hopes of recovering a portion of Mr. Tupman's property. Mr. Boozie, however, declined accompanying the party, as he intended to return to Calais by the mail that evening, and had a few calls to make, besides some commissions to execute, which would entirely engross the remainder of the morning. He therefore took leave of his friends, in case he should not see them again previous to his departure (for the *malle-poste* left the post-office at six o'clock precisely), and actually shed tears when he grasped the hand of the principal actor on the stage of our present memoirs. Even Mr. Weller was sensibly affected by the meditated departure of a worthy though eccentric man; but his feelings were speedily and materially relieved by the contiguity of the two five-franc pieces which Mr. Boozie slipped into his hand. A hackney-coach was immediately summoned, and Mr. Pickwick, followed by the Gendarme, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle, crept into the vehicle, while Mr. Weller contrived to carry himself to the seat next to the driver on the box. The Gendarme then gave the coachman a certain address, and the *fiacre* moved away from the gate of the hotel as speedily as one lame horse, and another that shyed every time it passed a vehicle, could make it.

After a short ride of about half-an-hour, the coach stopped at a large gate-way, and the Gendarme desired his companions to follow him. Mr. Weller, who thought he might as well be a spectator of what was going on, brought up the rear; and in due order was the procession ushered, at one and the same time, into the office, and the presence of the celebrated Vidocq himself.

The ex-galley-slave and ex-president of the Board of Public Safety rose, as his visitors entered the room, and received them with that cordiality and politeness which so eminently characterize the manners of the French, from the paladin in his splendid hotel in the Faubourg Saint Germain, to the humble peasant in the vales of Savoy. A brief conversation then ensued in their native language, between the Gendarme and Vidocq, which having been disposed of, the latter addressed himself to Mr. Tupman in tolerable English, and interrogated that gentleman as follows.

"What value, Sir, do you set on the watch of which you were plundered?"

"It was a present from my friend Pickwick," responded Mr. Tup-

man in a melancholy tone of voice, "and cost him, I believe, fifty guineas. He gave it to me in return for a very handsome patent philter which I sent him a few years ago."

"Yes," said Mr. Winkle, by way of corroborating Mr. Tupman's testimony, "it was about the same time that I bought for our excellent friend here—" indicating Mr. Pickwick—"a microscope which magnified a flea to the size of a large mouse."

"And on the same occasion," added Mr. Pickwick, turning with a glance of pride from his followers, to the great man who listened in silent admiration to the unquestionable reports of the witnesses, "I recollect that Snodgrass treated himself to the most complete rhyming dictionary extant."

The three Pickwickians felt that they had now done their duty as upright and honourable members of society, and the reward of their good actions was gathered in the approving smiles of each-other.

"You say, then, Sir," said M. Vidocq, after a pause, "that you value your watch at fifty pounds, English money?"

Mr. Tupman nodded assent, and Mr. Weller encouraged the whole party present to proceed in the investigation of the matter by assuring them that they might "go it, as crutches were cheap." This information, being in some way connected with the word "cripples," gave a most pleasing aspect to the face of the affair.

"If that be the case then," continued M. Vidocq, alluding to Mr. Tupman's answer, and not to Mr. Weller's observation, "you will not probably be averse to give fifteen pounds, sterling, for the recovery of your watch?"

"On the contrary," replied Mr. Tupman eagerly, "I shall do so with the greatest pleasure—provided I can also punish the delinquents."

"No—no," said Vidocq with a smile; "the watch will be returned on condition that no further notice be taken of the affair."

"Vonders vill never cease," cried Mr. Weller, "as the tailor said to the gen'leman ven he paid his bill."

"Sam," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Here you air, Sir," returned the valet, stepping forward, and pulling his front locks by way of salutation.

"Hold your tongue till you're spoken to," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Wery good, Sir," rejoined Mr. Weller, relapsing into the background.

In the meantime the negotiation, by the advice of the Gendarme, had been effected, and Mr. Tupman's stomach once more overhung the valued watch and chain he had lately despaired of ever recovering.

"You are probably acquainted, then, Sir, with Miss Anastasie de Volage," said Mr. Tupman, when he had counted out the money on the desk of the extraordinary personage in whose presence he stood.

"She has as many names, my dear Sir," answered Vidocq, "as I have had in my time—and those are not a few. Her father was a field-marshal of France, and her mother a *figurante* at the Opera. In process of time Mademoiselle Anastasie became a votary of the buskin also; and in that capacity, at the age of fifteen, she attracted the notice of a certain Count, and threw herself into his chariot and keeping at the same time. Her reign in that sphere lasted but a short time, and whenever she appended to herself a new name she added

the appurtenance of a new lover also. At length she became notorious—and foreigners are now the objects upon which she preys. At one time she is the daughter of a Marchioness, and at another a Marchioness herself. Her flights indeed have been so lofty, that the title of Duchess has not unfrequently been assumed to dupe her victims. She is at present, I understand, in a fair way to captivate and espouse an old English Lord, whom she met the day before yesterday, and whom she intends to lead to the hymeneal altar the day after to-morrow. Her mother, the Marchioness de Volage," added M. Vidocq, with a sly glance towards Mr. Tupman's countenance, "has been seventeen times before the Sixth Chamber of Correctional Police—twice before the Criminal Court of the Assizes—and once in the Penitentiary-prison."

So astounded was the unfortunate Mr. Tupman at these overwhelming tidings, that he would have certainly deemed it becoming and prudent to faint upon the spot, had he not perceived, on casting a hasty look around him, that his friends were at too great a distance to catch him in his meditated fall. He therefore applied his hand to his pocket—but, alas! he had accidentally left his handkerchief behind him. There was no alternative left: he could not weep—so he gave vent to his emotions in a sigh of more than decent length, while Mr. Weller muttered somewhat audibly the expressive dissyllable "Gammon!" and then hummed the popular air of "A froggie would a wooing go," to pretend that the ejaculation had not emanated from his especial lips. Mr. Pickwick looked a thunder-storm, and Mr. Winkle a flash of lightning: but no verbal reference was made to Mr. Weller's unaccountable behaviour.

It is to this occasion that we must look for the origin of that episode in Mr. Pickwick's adventurous life, which forms so extraordinary and important a feature in the memoirs of his continental tour. It would appear, that when the party was once more seated in the hackney-coach, Mr. Tupman's countenance was still elongated to so deplorable an extent, that Mr. Pickwick's benevolent heart was deeply touched by the consciousness of his friend's unhappiness. The weather was cold and stormy—the snow fell at intervals—and little in the way of amusement could thus be done in Paris. It was, however, necessary to adopt some measure in order to distract Mr. Tupman's mind from pondering on his woes; and Mr. Pickwick, with his usual foresight and wisdom, proposed a sort of pic-nic to the nearest agreeable town in the vicinity of Paris. The Gendarme was obliged to decline being one of the party: he, however, recommended his friends to proceed to St. Cloud, and put up at Legriel's well-known *restaurant*—two specific pieces of advice that were immediately put to the vote, and adopted without a single dissentient voice. M. Dumont accordingly took his leave of the Pickwickians; and having given some necessary instructions in their behalf to the driver, he left the hackney-coach to pursue the road to St. Cloud, and the adventurous Englishmen to the chances which a capricious fortune might throw in their way.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE VISIT TO ST. CLOUD.—THE GERMAN COURIER.—MR. PICKWICK THOUGH HIMSELF A TORY, ENTERS UPON AN EXCELLENT UNDERSTANDING WITH A WIG.—THE CONSEQUENCES OF SO DANGEROUS A PARTNERSHIP.

THE pavement, over which the hackney-coach rolled leisurely along, was unhappily ignorant of the greatness of the individuals shut up in the body of the vehicle; or it would otherwise have smoothed its own surface for the benefit of the travellers. As it was, the coach jolted from side to side, and compelled Mr. Pickwick and his companions to perform certain pleasing and exhilarating bounds upon their respective seats, which species of exercise materially benefitted their healths and increased the sharpness of their appetites. Mr. Tupman's countenance was speedily knocked into its proper shape and extension, at the same time that the crown of his hat was as easily and readily propelled to a level with the summit of that skull beneath which reposed the brain of Pickwick's friend!

The road to St. Cloud runs for a considerable distance along those wide and handsome quays which restrain the occasionally turbulent waters of the Seine within its prescribed limits. In summer-time this is one of the prettiest drives in the vicinity of Paris. The Champ de Mars and the ancient Military School greet the eyes of the traveller on the opposite banks; and on his right hand the heights of Passy afford an agreeable contrast to the adjacent scenery. Should he cast a look behind, he would see Paris in all its splendour and glory, the beams of the unclouded sun playing upon the golden summit of the Hospital of Invalids, gilding the pinnacles of the Pantheon, the Sorbonne, and the University, enlivening even the dark gigantic towers of Notre-Dame, and smiling, as if in mockery, on the sepulchres of Pere Lachaise in the distance. It is in the gay season of the year that the magnificence of "the sovereign city of a thousand towers"—to use the language of Victor Hugo—may be duly perceived and appreciated; when the eye can embrace that vast assemblage of human habitations and of mighty monuments, stretching from east to west, and from north to south, across the plain, like the Babylon of ancient days; when, distance precluding the possibility of the ear's catching the busy hum of life, occupation, and bustle, the imagination is set to work to picture to itself the pursuits of the million ephemerons of that vast ant-hill; and when the sky over-head is as pure and serene as the heavens of Italy or the Mediterranean Isles. Then may Paris be seen to advantage from the locality where we left our heroes for the purpose of entering upon this digression.

But the reader will remember that the day which Mr. Pickwick had so prudently selected for his country excursion, was tempestuous and gloomy; and that even if that extraordinary man had for one moment thought of mounting upon the top of the vehicle, and thence enjoying a quiet and comfortable view of the great city, his labour would have been ineffectual and ill-requited. We shall therefore jog

quietly on with the horses, the vehicle, and the travellers; we shall turn with them from the direct road, at the commencement of Auteuil; we shall accompany them in safety through the Bois de Boulogne—or Boulogne Wood—where, by the bye, Mr. Winkle whispered something, with a very pale face, about robbers and murderers, in Mr. Tupman's ears; and we shall assist the little party to alight at the back entrance to Legriel's celebrated *restaurant* at St. Cloud.

The hackney-coachman having been duly tutored by the thoughtful Dumont, saved Mr. Pickwick and his friends a world of trouble by desiring the waiter to provide a sumptuous repast for those gentlemen, and by conducting Mr. Weller to the kitchen, where a few dishes were speedily served up for their own especial behoof. By great good luck, the very identical German courier, who has been once or twice slightly alluded to in these memoirs, happened to be at St. Cloud on the very identical day, the adventures of which we are now so faithfully narrating. The moment Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle had been left to their fate by the hackney-coach driver, did the courier compassionately pounce upon them: and having first engaged their attention by speaking a language which, after some difficulty, they recognised to be their own vernacular tongue, he in two minutes put them in possession of certain facts, chiefly relating to his honourable calling, vast learning, and extensive travel, to all of which they listened with the deference suitable to the importance and solemnity of the subject.

"Gentelmans no dine yet, suppose?" said the courier, when he had brought his autobiographical sketch to a very desirable conclusion.

"Eh?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, considerably alarmed. "Do you mean to say, my good man, that we cannot dine here?"—and the immortal gentleman eyed the short, fat, shabbily-clad courier from head to foot with a glance of extreme inquisitiveness that would have startled any ordinary individual. Mr. Winkle, however, luckily comprehended the German's question, and gave the requisite reply.

"Gentelmans like see king's retreat in hot wedder?" demanded the courier.

"A summer-house, I suppose," said Mr. Pickwick. "Is there any thing remarkable besides the grape-vines attached to it?"

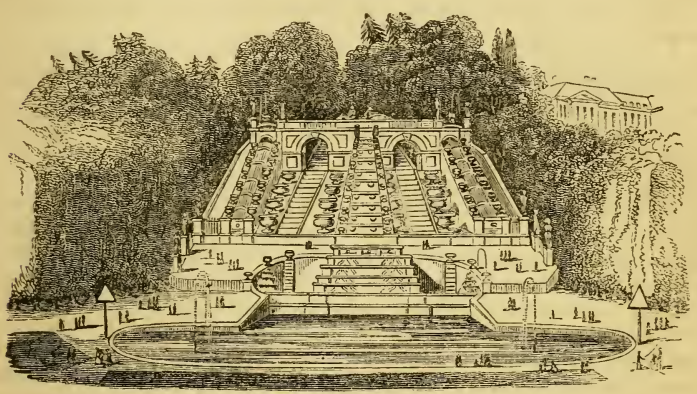
"Yes—yes," replied the courier; "plenty of ting. First, there is vere fine fish."

"Ah! hung up to dry; I see," observed Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands with philanthropic delight to think that the king attended to all his little comforts as well as to the affairs of the nation.

The courier perceived that there was a mistake somewhere; and thinking that any explanation or attempt to rectify it by words would be useless—for he entertained the unholy and ridiculous idea that Mr. Pickwick was an old fool, and Messieurs Tupman and Winkle nothing better—he made a sign which no one could misinterpret, and which was immediately obeyed. The German accordingly led the way through the extensive park, and conducted the three gentlemen to the Palace of St. Cloud, the chaste and simple, but beautiful architecture of which elicited the warmest approbation of the distinguished persons of whose presence the building was unhappily unconscious, else had its thousand bricks sent forth as many melodious voices to welcome their

arrival. The mystery relative to the fish was also cleared up in an equally satisfactory manner, by the existence of a large and handsome bason that was overlooked by the terrace in front of the Chateau, and was well stocked with the finest carp and tench that ever met mortal eye or were intended to satiate mortal appetite.

The German had a host of anecdotes connected with the palace, the water, and the fish, to relate to Mr. Pickwick and that gentleman's companions, whose only surprise was that the courier had not long ago been bound in calf and placed in some public museum as the most capacious and accurate history extant. The water-works were then visited by our persevering travellers; and after a long inspection of that stupendous edifice, which has probably no rival in the world,



the constructions at Versailles being of a different description, they returned to Legriel's, where they liberally remunerated the German courier for his trouble, and sate down to as good a repast as ever was prepared within those classic cells, each of which is not above eight feet square.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, when Mr. Pickwick and his friends emerged from the *petit cabinet* in which they had dined, and, by the assistance of Mr. Weller, were once more precipitated into the hackney-coach. The driver then mounted with considerable difficulty into his seat, and the vehicle moved briskly on towards Paris.

"Do you know," said Mr. Pickwick, prefacing his observation with a mysterious shake of the head,—"do you know that I am sadly afraid Sam has had a little—mind, I do not say much—but a small drop to drink this afternoon?"

"He certainly pushed me into the coach with unnecessary violence," remarked Mr. Tupman.

"And I myself noticed," said Mr. Winkle, "that he smelt horribly of liquor.'

"I shouldn't at all wonder, then," continued Mr. Pickwick, still more mysteriously than ever, "if the coachman were drunk also."

"And it is thus that you entrust your valuable life to such hands!" cried Mr. Winkle in a tone of indignant remonstrance; "for me and

Tupman to have done so, might be pardonable;—but—" and Mr. Winkle, with a very pale face, held his peace.

Mr. Pickwick did not deliberate another moment. He was determined not to be killed in a hackney-coach to please anybody; he accordingly put his head out of the window, and peremptorily commanded his domestic to cause the vehicle to be immediately stopped. His orders were instantly obeyed—the door was opened—and Mr. Pickwick leapt lightly out of the coach into the middle of the road.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick hastily.

"Sir," replied that gentleman with the usual touch of the hat.

"Get into the coach," cried Mr. Pickwick. "I am going to drive."

"You, Sir!" exclaimed Mr. Weller, in the most unfeigned astonishment.

"Yes—I, Sir," returned Mr. Pickwick in a tone which plainly demonstrated that he was serious. Mr. Weller did not venture another remonstrance: he merely advised his master "to vhip the osses vell, as they vouldn't holloa," and jumped into the place that had just been relinquished by Mr. Pickwick, when he again gave vent to his feelings in certain audible expressions of wonder and discontent.

Thus far had Mr. Pickwick succeeded in accomplishing the aim he had in view. It however remained for him to prevail upon the coachman to descend from his airy situation on the box, and also accept of a seat in the interior of the vehicle. This object was speedily effected through the sagacious *medium* of certain jerks at the driver's great-coat, and a perfect encyclopædia of signs, by which Mr. Pickwick eventually succeeded in making known his intentions and wishes. The Frenchman had indeed imbibed somewhat too liberally of the excellent fluids with which Mr. Weller had generously regaled him at Legriel's; and without giving himself much trouble to consider the motives of Mr. Pickwick's proceedings, he slowly relinquished possession of the dickey, and conveyed his person to the more commodious place humanely provided for him by the fears of that humane gentleman.

With a smile of triumph that would not have shamed a Cæsar when he had worsted a Pompey, did Mr. Pickwick gather up the whip and reins, and ascend to that eminence whence he had so prudently dislodged the coachman and Mr. Weller. Crack went the whip—round went the wheels—and the horses put as much energy into their movements, as the lameness of the one and the vicious inclinations of the other would permit. But, alas! scarcely had the equipage entered the Bois de Boulogne, when a violent hail-storm took the liberty of pelting on Mr. Pickwick's person as well as upon the common things around; and while that illustrious gentleman essayed to button up his coat across his breast, and thus partially to defend himself against the inclemency of the weather, his hat and whip took a sudden and unexpected leave of him at the same time.

Now it happened, that when Mr. Pickwick stopped the vehicle to alight and look after his property, which seemed to be any thing but disposed to look after him, the coachman and Mr. Weller were fast asleep inside; and it was also a fact that Messieurs Tupman and Winkle, upon enquiring "what was the matter!" were desired by

their great leader "to remain quiet, and he would soon resume his functions on the dickey." Having thus tranquillized his friends, Mr. Pickwick commenced a vigorous and hearty chase after his hat, which appeared very much inclined to return to St. Cloud as speedily as possible. While Mr. Pickwick was thus engaged, the horses, being naturally averse to stand idle in the cold and sleet, set off at a tolerably decent trot; and as Messieurs Tupman and Winkle never imagined for a moment that the box was not once more occupied by the volunteer-driver, they remained perfectly calm and easy in their respective places, discussing those topics which usually interest great men—such as the rain, the hail, the snow, and the state of the roads.

In the meantime, the unfortunate cause of all this unpleasant dilemma—or, in other words, the refractory hat—conducted its owner to the very verge of a tolerably muddy ditch, into the recesses of which that gentleman felt no inclination to descend after his lost property. He therefore relinquished all hope of recovering the beaver tegument; and, without yielding himself up to grief and despair, enveloped his head in his silk pocket-handkerchief, and turned to retrace his steps towards the vehicle he had abandoned a quarter of an hour before. But the hail-storm pelted pitilessly upon him; and, to add to his difficulties, he missed the direct road and turned into a bye-one, the mazes of which soon involved him in the intricacies of the wood.

It was now, for the first time, that Mr. Pickwick began to be seriously alarmed at his predicament; and the idea of being laid up in bed with a dangerous cold, was not the least unpleasant reflection that harassed his imagination. What, then, was the extent of his joy and surprise when a dingy object, hanging to the branch of a tree at a little distance, and bearing a strong resemblance to a large wig, met his eyes?

"Impossible!" thought Mr. Pickwick within himself: "a wig in the middle of Boulogne wood! ridiculous;"—and he was about to hasten by, when a closer inspection established the identity his mind had already imagined. "Well—after all, it *is* a wig!" cried Mr. Pickwick aloud, as he took it from the tree and turned it over and over in his hands. "And a very excellent wig it is too! Extraordinary—but the inside is as dry as a bone;"—and without any further hesitation, Mr. Pickwick divested his head of the silk pocket-handkerchief, and substituted the aforesaid article in its place.

The wig was not a very handsome one; but it was very useful and very warm. It was made of tow, and the back part of it fell in ample and graceful folds over Mr. Pickwick's coat-collar and shoulders, thus giving to his appearance a certain theatrical air, essentially at variance with his wonted grave and dignified deportment. Indeed, he has since declared that it struck him at the time that the wig must have been accidentally left in that identical spot by some strolling player or juggler. Time, however, convinced him of the incorrectness of this surmise.

Protected in so unlooked-for and providential a manner against the violence of the hail-storm, and wearing the capacious brown wig as if he had been made for it, and it for him—Mr. Pickwick pushed manfully onwards, at one moment marvelling whither he was going, and at another humming "God save the King" to the tune of the Old

Hundredth Psalm. With such facilities of varying his amusement, it is not to be wondered at if Mr. Pickwick took no note of time; nor shall we be much surprised to learn that the shades of night dimmed the lustre of that great man by enveloping him in its mists, before he had satisfactorily determined in his own mind where he was to seek for shelter. He however congratulated himself upon the possession of the old brown wig, and forgot that if he had been in England he would have certainly passed as a fugitive Pantaloon from an itinerant sixpenny theatre.

Mr. Pickwick had probably wandered through the mazes of the wood for about an hour, when the train of his meditations was interrupted by the coincidence of a slight fall which he had in the middle of a tolerably deep ditch; and, on his emerging therefrom, he only leapt out of the frying-pan into the fire. In other words, he had no sooner managed to scramble to the top of the bank, when he was roughly seized by the unsaintly hands of three or four individuals whom the clattering of swords and other articles of military equipment pronounced to be Gendarmes. If any doubt remained in Mr. Pickwick's mind as to the actual profession of the gentlemen into whose power he had fallen, it was speedily dispersed by the light which a dark lanthorn speedily threw upon the whole party, the said dark lanthorn being an especial *item* in the catalogue of worldly possessions which called the chief of the Gendarmes "owner."

Our hero's first impulse was to level an avalanche of eloquence at the Gendarmes who thus illegally detained his august person in custody: his second, being doubtless prompted by a very shrewd suspicion that the officers did not understand the exact *minutiæ* of his language, was to hold his peace, and accompany his captors in meek resignation to the place whither it seemed good to them to conduct him. In pursuance of this plan, Mr. Pickwick was obliged to retrace his steps in conformity with the wishes and movements of his careful guides; and in three quarters of an hour the cavalcade entered the little town of Boulogne,* Mr. Pickwick with his comfortable and becoming wig marching in the midst of the grim-looking police that surrounded him. To the honour of the French be it, however, mentioned, that as Mr. Pickwick marched in state through Boulogne, no eggs assailed his person, although plenty of sarcasm was levelled against his portentous wig by the groups of idlers whom the novelty of the scene not a little amused. But the individual who had whilome founded the most celebrated club that ever existed, and had carried his researches not only into many obscure parts of his own country, but even to the metropolis of a foreign one, was not to be daunted by the shouts of laughter, hurraing, and screaming, which his august presence beneath the brown wig elicited from the inhabitants of Boulogne.

Mr. Pickwick was marched direct to the office of the Commissary of Police of the little town aforesaid; and after a few preliminary forms, that functionary of the law proceeded to inform him that he was "apprehended under the suspicion of being a notorious robber and thief, who, in divers disguises, but especially in that of the brown wig, had

* Boulogne is a small town in the vicinity of Paris. Hence the distinction of Boulogne-sur-Mer, or Boulogne-by-the-Sea.

committed many daring excesses in the vicinity of Boulogne, St. Cloud, Versailles, and St. Germain; that the day previous to the one on which he was thus fortunately arrested, he had robbed an old lady —a resident of Boulogne aforesaid—of the sum of three hundred and seventy-nine francs, seventeen centimes; that the robbery was effected in or near the identical spot where the Gendarmes had succeeded in capturing him as he emerged from his place of concealment; and that numbers were ready to come forward and identify the wig he wore with the one which usually disguised the robber who had so long haunted the neighbourhood of the places above mentioned."

As Mr. Pickwick did not of course comprehend one syllable of this serious indictment, he contented himself by staring vacantly at the magistrate, and by making a few signs to intimate that he was a foreigner; whereupon the Gendarmes whispered to each other, "that they never saw a more sanctified-looking old rascal in the whole course of their lives," and at the same time coincided in a kind and satisfactory opinion to the effect that the guillotine was marked on his countenance. It, however, struck the Commissary that the terrible malefactor in question was really unacquainted with the French language; and as the official interpreter—from whom Mr. Pickwick subsequently gathered the substance of the *proces-verbal* above stated, as well as the nature of the policemen's remarks—was in attendance, our venerable hero was forthwith put in possession of the merits of the case, and the history of the charges brought against him.

No sooner was Mr. Pickwick thus made aware of the real state of the matter as it stood, than his first impulse was to dash the unfortunate wig into the faces of the Gendarmes who had arrested him, and his second to burst into a long and eloquent string of invectives against those mistaken functionaries. The Commissary himself, judging from Mr. Pickwick's sincerity of manner, began to apprehend that the real thief was still at large, and that an innocent gentleman was arraigned in his stead. But if any thing more conclusive than his own explanation—which, unhappily, none save the interpreter for some time understood—were wanting to establish Mr. Pickwick's innocence, the testimony of the old lady, who had been robbed, and who now presented herself at the office for the especial purpose of acting as witness in the case, was definitive. The Commissary accordingly dismissed the accused with a hundred apologies for the inconvenience he had suffered; and the Gendarmes condescended to announce to each other that he was not, after all, so "very roguish-looking a fellow." The case was thus promptly disposed of; and Mr. Pickwick accompanied the interpreter to the principal hotel in the town, where an excellent supper was provided at the expense of the former gentleman, and done justice to by both.

It was about half-past nine o'clock, when Mr. Pickwick paid the bill, and intimated to the interpreter his intention to return to Paris, as his friends were most probably uneasy on account of his prolonged absence. The Frenchman assured Mr. Pickwick that there were no public vehicles to the metropolis at so late an hour in the evening; and having an eye to his own interest, the wily interpreter, after a long discourse upon the restlessness of horses, and the danger of trusting to strange animals in an unfrequented road, persuaded his docile com-

panion to accept the loan of a fine donkey to conduct him to Meurice's hotel.

"Vere noble animal, milor," said the obsequious Frenchman: "he as well know road as diligence-horse himself. He go easy—he not bolt—he vere fine beast, indeed!"

Mr. Pickwick, overcome by the insinuating arguments and eloquence of the interpreter, at length consented to *accept* the proffered loan, for which the sum of five and twenty francs was duly exacted, when the animal made its appearance at the door of the hotel. Mr. Pickwick had, however, gone too far to recede: he accordingly paid the fee required by the interpreter, purchased a hat of the landlord, and mounted into the saddle with a species of desperate courage that did him infinite credit, and tends in no small degree to contribute to the increase of his reputation. The interpreter, the host and hostess, and about fourteen dependants of the hotel, were marshalled at the door to witness his departure; and when, having taken leave of the multitude by a polite bow, the gallant "horseman" pushed his donkey into a smart gallop, which was only introduced by sundry kicks on both sides, a loud huzza betokened the mirth of those he left behind, and, at the same time, materially accelerated the speed adopted by the interesting beast he bestrode.

But let us hasten and bring this extraordinary episode to a conclusion. The clock at the magnificent palace of the Minister of Finance had struck the mystic hour of one, when a loud ring at the gate of Meurice's hotel disturbed the porter in his lodge, Messieurs Tupman and Winkle in the coffee-room, and Mr. Samuel Weller in the kitchen —each of the above-named gentlemen having anxiously awaited the arrival of the lost sheep. The gates were immediately opened with the least possible delay; and to the astonishment of those who crowded in the arch-way to welcome his return, Mr. Pickwick galloped into the court-yard of the hotel upon the noble donkey he had so prudently and sagaciously hired of the interpreter at Boulogne.

"Vell," said Mr. Weller, while he assisted his master to alight, "this is raythor too strong, as the duke observed ven they shoved him into the Malmesey butt."

"Thank God you have come back safe and sound," exclaimed Mr. Tupman, glancing first at Mr. Pickwick, and then at the donkey.

"If you had not returned to-night," added Mr. Winkle, with a sob, "I'm sure I don't know what I should have done. My feelings had nearly overpowered me as it was."

So indeed they had: for the excellent and good-hearted young man had found it necessary to make such frequent applications to a certain mixture called punch, in order to maintain any thing approaching to command over himself, that, in the eminently graphic and descriptive language of Mr. Weller, he was, at the identical moment of Mr. Pickwick's return, "crying drunk;" and in the wildness of his joy at so safe an arrival, he first embraced that gentleman, and then the ass which brought him, with a rapture that actually forced tears into the eyes of his venerable friend himself. Mr. Pickwick saw that he was beloved by his companions—he was not jealous of the notice thus bestowed on the interpreter's donkey—his mind scorned to entertain so selfish

a thought—and in the luxury of the moment he wept in concert with his affectionate companion Winkle.

An adjournment, on the part of the gentlemen, to the coffee-room, and on that of the donkey to the stable, then took place; and while the last-named individual partook of a *modicum* of hay and a drink of water for his supper, Mr. Pickwick, on the other hand, related his adventures to his wondering friends, and listened in return to the short account which Mr. Tupman had to give him relative to a disagreeable upset which the hackney-coach and its occupiers experienced in the midst of a muddy road, the alarm that had been felt on account of Mr. Pickwick's unaccountable absence, and the particulars of an eventually safe arrival at the Hotel Meurice. These interesting details being mutually disposed of, the several gentlemen retired to their beds, and doubtless enjoyed the luxuries of the sweet repose that shortly there overtook them.

CHAPTER XIX.

THIS IS A SHORT CHAPTER, IN WHICH CERTAIN PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM ARE SUCCINCTLY DETAILED

About a week after the important date of the no less important occurrences related in the preceding chapter, two letters were placed in Mr. Pickwick's hands, as he one morning emanated from his bedroom in the eternal black gaiters and a coeval good humour. As the handwriting of both was perfectly unknown to his experienced eye, he did not open the epistles forthwith, but prudently turned them backwards and forwards in his hands, and surveyed with peculiar sharpness the fashion of the folds. As an instance of experimental philosophy—being an essay as to the practicability of reading the interior through the *medium* of an outward inspection—the attempt was indeed a curious one; but as an ordinary and every-day pursuit, it might doubtless have met with many dissentient voices and much disapprobation. Be that as it may—for we must remind the reader of the fact that Mr. Pickwick was no common individual—the letters were eventually opened and perused; and these were the contents of the first.

"Sir,

"Your respected letter arrived at a hand-gallop a day or two ago, and I accordingly despatch you a reply, which I hope will reach you at something better than a canter. Mr. Crashem trotted into my debt so pleasantly and quietly that he did not turn a hair, nor I a shilling. It was about the time that my head-ostler was hanged for horse-stealing, that the bill commenced; and when my second wife ran away from me, I opened my eyes to the tremendous pace at which he was going. The elopement of my youngest daughter, Hyacintha, with Theophilus-Lucius Grubem, the dogs-meat man, scarcely affected

me more than the loss of the little filly, whose wind he broke when going to Doncaster in that lovely shay I lent him for the occasion. But that was not all. He borrowed a pair of leather breeches and gaiters of the groom, and forgot to restore them when the poor fellow was sent to the treadmill. He humbugged the under-ostler to accept of some squibs in return for a pair of spurs—told me I was no gentleman when I sent in my bill—asked me to dine with him, borrowed my plate, and never restored it to me, but assured me, with all the impudence in the world, 'that he had lent it to his uncle'—and at length cut me at the theatre, because I went in my top-boots and new checked neckerchief. Under these circumstances, Sir, I cannot consent to take one farthing less than the amount of my bill; and remain,

"Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"MICHAEL NAGSFLESH."

The second and last letter ran as follows:—

"Sir,

"I am desired by Mr. Stickemin to acknowledge your favour, and to assure you that he would willingly accede to Mr. Adolphus Crashem's proposition, did not two or three little circumstances prevent him. In the first place, the name of Crashem is but an assumed one, and was printed upon his card about the very time he ever put on the first pair of leather unutterables, made for him by Mr. Stickemin. In the second place, he dressed up a common horse-chaunter as a gentleman, and introduced him to us as a nobleman of rank and fortune, whereby Mr. Stickemin was a loser to the amount of eighty-seven pounds nineteen shillings and eleven pence halfpenny. (See Ledger, page 187.) And in the third place—but there are also a great many other places, if I did but choose to mention them—this Mr. Crashem, or whatever his name may be, persuaded Mrs. Stickemin to purchase a small dancing-bear, which he had himself bought for a paltry sum, at the enormous value of twenty pounds lawful money of this realm.

"Your obedient servant (for A. Stickemin),

"TIMOTHY RUNNITUP."

Scarcely had Mr. Pickwick perused the contents of these letters, and made known their nature to Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle, when they all met at the breakfast-table, before Mr. Weller entered the room.

"Vell," said that individual, without waiting to be questioned relative to the cause of the strange smile that curled his lip, "I'm blowed if ever I see such a go as this is. Jack-the-Giant-Killer ain't nothin' to it."

"What's the matter, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, almost choking himself with the fear of another visit from Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"Vy, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, "there's a wery res-pectable old chap down in the coffee-room, as keeps a public in the Borough. I

don't know the name o' the tap exactly; but I often see him ven I vos boots at the old inn from vich you took me, Sir; and I heerd say in those times—"

"But what is there extraordinary in that?" enquired Mr. Pickwick somewhat sharply. "A respectable tavern-keeper has as much right to come to Meurice's hotel as ourselves, provided he conducts himself properly."

"Yes, Sir—that's all wery vell, and nobody doesn't come for'ard for to contrawert it, as the parson said ven he published the banns for the two Blackey-moors," returned Mr. Weller: "but this old gen'leman doesn't live here at all. He's brought a letter o' introduction to a friend of his vich keeps a public in Paris; and is come to the hottel to rek-vire some information touchin' and consarnin' his son."

"Indeed," said Mr. Pickwick, beginning to feel himself interested in that which his valet was narrating to him: "And pray what is the name of the individual to whom you allude?"

"Sugden, Sir," answered Mr. Weller: "he calls his-self honest Jack Sugden, late o' the What's-his-name, and present landlord o' the Thing-um-bob. He's troubled vith a short memory, Sir, just for all the vorld like the ministers of his blessed Majesty."

Mr. Pickwick did not wait to hear the conclusion of his faithful domestic's remarks. He rose hastily from his chair as soon as the name of "Sugden" met his ears, even at the risk of overturning the breakfast-table into Mr. Nathaniel Winkle's lap, and hurried down stairs to the coffee-room as quickly as his legs could carry him. On his arrival in that sacred fane, he glanced around him in order to ascertain the locality occupied by the proprietor of the aristocratic nomenclature that thus had excited his energies and his curiosity; and in a moment his eyes alighted upon a fat, red-faced, bald-headed individual, whose dress and occupation at once denoted the landlord of the respectable "public" in the Borough. The former of those enlightening characteristics—or in other words, the stranger's attire was composed of a blue coat and brass buttons, a long buff waistcoat, a white neckcloth, drab trowsers, and gaiters of the same; and his occupation was the important discussion of a mighty plate of cold roast-beef, and his second bottle of London porter by way of breakfast. Mr. Pickwick was convinced, after he had cast one glance at the gentleman here described, and another at his agreeable avocations, that no other person in the coffee-room was worthy of bearing so distinguished a patronymic as that of Sugden. To the astonishment, therefore, of the waiters present, and of Mr. Weller, who had followed his master down-stairs, and whose surprise had ere now been so considerably excited by the presence of a tavern-keeper at Meurice's hotel,—Mr. Pickwick stepped up to the individual under notice (as the reviewers would say of a book), and accosted him with a polite bow which could be only intended as a preliminary to a farther and more intimate acquaintance.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, in the blandest tone of voice he had ever yet assumed, "but—if I mistake not—your name is Sugden—Mr. Sugden, I believe."

"Yes, Sir, it is," replied the gentleman thus addressed, as he eyed

Mr. Pickwick askance, "and you, I suppose," continued Mr. Sugden, "are the landlord of What's-his-name-hotel—ain't you?"

Mr. Pickwick at once pleaded not guilty to this indictment; and in order to inspire his fellow-countryman with confidence, he declared his name and titles with as much correctness as if he were an aristocrat reading a genealogy aloud from Mr. Lodge's "Peerage."

"Perhaps you'll jine me, then, Mr. Thing-um-bob?" suggested Mr. Sugden, glancing towards Mr. Pickwick, and indicating the half-emptied bottle of porter with a subtle jerk of his right hand. Mr. Sugden's powers of recollection were exceedingly circumscribed; and in order to avoid the disagreeable necessity of wearing them out by putting them to a too frequent test, he prudently supplied the places of real names with other compounds of his own invention.

"No, I thank you," returned Mr. Pickwick, politely declining the proffered glass of porter: "my object in addressing myself to you, Sir, was to ascertain if you were acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Crashem."

"Don't *you* think, Mr. What-the-devil's-your name," enquired Mr. Sugden in slow and measured terms, "that a father ain't a bein' admirably well calculated to recognise his own son?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Pickwick, hastily: "and he is not the only son and heir, then, of General Crashem, of Crashem Park?"

"All gammon," laconically answered Mr. Sugden.

"Nor engaged to be married to Miss Grinwell, of Grinwell Lodge, Somersetshire?" added Mr. Pickwick.

"No more than you are, Mr. What-is-it," responded the stout gentleman. "His grandfather, which was a respectable cow-herd in that county, left him a few pounds that was soon squandered away; and I, Mr. Thing-um-bob, am honest Jack Sugden of the *Lanthorn and Cat* in the Borough, elector and overseer, and a loyal subject of Great What-d'ye-call-it. Them's my titles;"—and as he gave utterance to these dignified words, he looked around him with an air that seemed to challenge any one to deny his rank or his assertions.

"You are aware, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick after a short pause, "that your son is in the debtors' prison of this city?"

"So I heerd from one of his London trades-men," answered Mr. Sugden; "and that's what brought me over to Frogland. He's my only son, and I can't suffer him to rot in a gaol, which he might do."

"Perhaps he might," said Mr. Pickwick, drily, as the reminiscences of the debauch and the discount flashed across his mind. "But, if it be your intention to call upon him in his place of confinement, I will accompany you. I have not been there lately."

"With pleasure, Mr. Devil-take-the-name, and much obleeged into the bargain," exclaimed the proprietor of the *Lanthorn and Cat;* then in the fulness of his heart and the communicativeness of the feelings which Mr. Pickwick's kindness and the bottled porter had together encouraged, he proceeded to favour that gentleman with a slight sketch of his volatile son's past life.

It appears that when Mr. Adolphus Crashem, *alias* Mr. William Sugden, arrived at the age of fifteen, a practised utilitarian and generous patron of the working-classes, placed at his unqualified disposal the sum of six guineas *per annum* and a couple of suits of livery, in re-

turn for certain duties which the youth was requested to perform. Amongst those functions, the polishing of boots, waiting at table, and standing behind a cab were the most prominent, and consequently the most onerous. But Mr. William Sugden inherited from his father a remarkable shortness of memory; and this defect was one day developed in the following singular manner. The young gentleman was despatched to a banker to procure cash for a cheque; it is, however, supposed that he must have lost his way and been robbed of the money, as he certainly forgot to return and report the real state of the case to his master.

About this time, Mr. William Sugden fell in with Mr. Tims—an old school-fellow—and through the interest made in his behalf by the last-named gentleman, he obtained the lucrative and responsible situation of light porter, in the highly respectable firm of Messieurs Bodkin and Grogram. The elder Mr. Sugden then interceded in behalf of his son; and the young aspirant was duly promoted to the post of traveller for the house in which his fortunes were now embarked. The prosperity of his masters had been established in the beginning on the solid basis of a floating capital of about eighteen-pence; and Mr. William Sugden did not doubt but that his own glories might as easily be erected and maintained.

But his shortness of memory was again an impediment to his progress in the walks of commercial life; and the various sums of money which he received in the country and forgot to account for in town, were the origin of his disgrace in the opinions of Messieurs Bodkin and Grogram. To be brief, those gentlemen, with unfeeling abruptness, dared to remind Mr. William Sugden of his trivial though numerous oversights, which, in their ignorance of the English language, they denominated "peculations." A police-officer was accordingly summoned to remove Mr. Sugden from the premises; but as that highly injured man was desirous of giving no trouble where his services had been so ill-requited, and not deigning to explain his conduct, he manfully threw up his situation and left his employers to shift for themselves without even notifying his intentions. Indeed, he determined, as he subsequently expressed himself to his indignant father, never to show his face in the neighbourhood of Messieurs Bodkin and Grogram's abode, so long as he had a nose protruding from his countenance.

It is pleasing to be enabled to trace the progress of great and remarkable men. Being now thrown upon his own resources, and not choosing to walk about London with his hands and nothing else in his pockets, Mr. William Sugden borrowed a few guineas of his father, and opened a discount office under an assumed name, in a fashionable street at the West End of London. His mode of doing business was singular in the extreme, and bears ample testimony to the extent of his organ of inventiveness. Instead of discounting the bills that were left in his hands for that purpose, he usually made his clients pay a handsome remuneration to get them back again; and as those clients were chiefly young men about town, who had a certain appearance to keep up, it did not suit them to expose the bad state of their affairs by commencing legal proceedings against the firm of which Mr. William Sugden was the sole support and representative. But at

length, to use his father's own expressive language, "he was blown," and obliged to shift his quarters to the cool and tranquil retreat afforded by a garret in the *Lanthorn and Cat* itself.

Mr. William Sugden's talents were, however, of too brilliant a nature to be concealed in the unsentimental abode their proprietor had now chosen; and a farther supply of coin, to which he prudently helped himself from his parent's till, enabled him to make a short tour in the West of England, accompanied by sundry packs of cards and pairs of dice which he had previously arranged to suit his own peculiar purposes. It is uncertain in what manner this extraordinary young man availed himself, during his tour, of those means which nature and a little art had placed at his disposal. There was, however, a strange story afloat at the time, relative to a certain individual of a certain description having been detected in certain nefarious practices with the dice, at a certain mess-table in a certain town; and a few other little circumstances, that bore collateral reference to this rumour, at once established in Mr. Sugden senior's mind, the conviction of the identity of his son and heir with the individual alluded to.

Be that as it may, it is a well-known and indisputable fact, that Mr. William Sugden returned to London with a few hundred pounds in his pocket, and became a regular visitor to the various gambling-houses with which the West End of the English Metropolis is so eminently adorned. Malicious people have ventured to assert that the young gentleman himself became "a bonnet" or decoy at one of the principal establishments he was thus pleased to honour with his presence; but as to the truth of so gross an assertion there exists no real evidence. Suffice it to say, that in a very short period Mr. Sugden amassed the sum of a thousand pounds, or thereabouts, and that he had created for himself a snug and quiet little circle of acquaintance, the chief members of which were the proprietors and frequenters of the *pandemonia* where money may be lost in so speedy and highly satisfactory a manner.

Mr. William Sugden now set up in business as a "young man about town," and dropping his own hereditary patronymic, adopted the more aristocratic one of Adolphus Crashem. But in every instance was the extraordinary family failing with which he was afflicted, more and more developed. He not only forgot to pay the stipulated price for the various articles he profusely ordered from about sixteen different jewellers resident at the West End of London; but, in a state of uncertainty as to the real owner of the goods thus supplied, and with a view to their security which speaks volumes for his prudence and forethought, he conveyed them to the safe and assured custody of the nearest pawnbroker. Indeed, to do him full justice, he subsequently handed over the duplicates to the aforesaid jewellers, when interrogated as to the manner in which the property had been disposed of.

Virtue seldom meets with its reward in this life. The sixteen jewellers, aided by Messieurs Stickemin and Nagsflesh—the two individuals before alluded to, concocted a base and Catiline-like conspiracy against the peace and well-being of Mr. Adolphus Crashem. These misguided men, in a moment of opaqueness not easily conceived by the intelligent reader, ventured to accuse their victim of a variety of ne-

farious and fraudulent practices, the full meaning of which his upright and correct mind could not readily imagine. The ideas of his conspirators were however conveyed to him through the organ of a police-officer; but, not choosing to be even suspected of dishonesty, he prudently made his escape from the clutches of B 155, and fled to France, whither the machinations of his enemies, he fondly hoped, could scarcely follow him.

Such was the concise account of Mr. Crashem's early adventures, which Mr. Pickwick gleaned from the statement of that gentleman's father. When the narrative was brought to a conclusion, our venerated hero summoned his domestic and friends, and desired them to accompany himself and Mr. Sugden to the New Prison. This request was immediately complied with; and in about three quarters of an hour, the little party was unpacked from a hackney-coach at the gate of the edifice just named. Mr. Pickwick led the way; and the procession passed on towards the apartment occupied by the object of this solemn visit. The object himself was seated at the table with his inestimable friends, Messieurs Lipman, Jopling, and Tims; and as those gentlemen had already commenced their orgies, the sight was doubtless a very gratifying one to a father who was afraid that his son might be rotting in a gaol.

"Well, Master What's-his-name—you've got into Thing-um-bob at last, have you?" enquired Mr. Sugden, senior, as he indignantly surveyed the person of his delinquent son. "Now, mind what I say, young man: if so be as you don't mend your ways—and very speedily too—I'll be d—d if you don't come to be sent abroad for your country's good."

"Indeed," suggested Mr. Pickwick blandly, who did not precisely comprehend the nature of the figure of speech by which Mr. Sugden intended to represent the slight inconvenience called *transporting;* "I should not imagine that your son would so easily obtain a government situation, unless he conducts himself better in future:—" and in order to punish the culprit for the duplicity and systematic deception he had so successfully practised upon the credulity of those who would have been his friends, Mr. Pickwick proceeded to read aloud the contents of the letters he had that morning received from London, and which bore such flattering and highly creditable testimonials to the good character of the subject of them. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the prison-companions of Mr. Sugden, junior, were fairly convulsed at the detail of that gentleman's delinquencies in London; and that Mr. Tims pronounced him to be "the most knowing cove" with whose acquaintance he had ever been honoured. Even the respectable landlord of the *Lanthorn and Cat* himself indulged in an ill-suppressed chuckle, as Mr. Pickwick read the aforesaid derogatory epistles aloud to the whole party present.

"Perhaps you'd like to take something to drink, Sir, after that?" said Mr. Lipman, when the letters were again consigned to Mr. Pickwick's pocket.

"Or tip us a stave of the old hundredth psalm," suggested Mr. Jopling.

"Or stand on your head for a wager," added Mr. Tims.

"Come—come, none o' that 'ere, gen'lemen," cried Mr. Weller,

elbowing his way between the persons of Messieurs Tupman and Winkle, and confronting the three facetious friends of the *quondam* Adolphus Crashem, with a threatening attitude. "Don't you see, Sir, that them chaps is humbugging you vith their wery polite offers to drink, and all other sorts o' gammon? For tuppense I'd pitch into 'em, as the little boy said ven he saw the mince-pies in his mother's larder."

"We had better retire, Sam," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, casting a withering glance at the three gentlemen, who immediately burst out into a most irreverent laugh, instead of being scorched in their chairs.

"Ve had, Sir," returned Mr. Weller emphatically, "an' for fear o' contamination too, as the street-sweeper said ven he made vay for the dustman."

Mr. Pickwick accordingly turned abruptly on his heel, and hastily left the apartment, followed by Messieurs Tupman, Winkle, and Weller; while Mr. Sugden, senior, proceeded to take measures for the prompt emancipation of his son and heir from the walls of the New Prison—the subsequent accomplishment of which feat in the course of the day awakened no small feeling of regret in the minds of Mr. Lipman and Mr. Jopling, who probably foresaw a considerable chance of being frequently condemned to have recourse to the baked-potatoes and butter as a cheap and wholesome substitute for those succulent repasts they had been accustomed to partake of at the table of Mr. William Sugden.

CHAPTER XX.

MR. SCUTTLE AND MR. WALKER ARE INTRODUCED AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME.—BERENGER'S CELEBRATED NATIONAL AIR.—THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—SOMETHING MARVELLOUSLY INTERESTING IS LEFT FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER.

When Mr. Pickwick and his companions once more returned to the superb caravanseray at which they resided, Mr. Weller was dismissed to amuse himself to the best of his endeavours, and the three gentlemen proceeded to their common sitting-room, to write a variety of letters, in the despatch of which correspondence they were somewhat in arrear. Mr. Pickwick was desirous of communicating with his stock-broker—Mr. Winkle with his beloved spouse and revered father—and Mr. Tupman with a couple of young milliners, the one residing in Pimlico, and the other in Pentonville, who formed part and parcel of the circle of his acquaintance. Other epistles were also to be indited for the perusal of Mr. Augustus Snodgrass and a plurality of friends. It was therefore unanimously agreed to devote the morning to the occupation of writing, and the evening to the less innocent but more diverting entertainment of visiting the Royal Academy of Music, and the Theatre of the Porte Saint Martin, Mr. Pickwick sagaciously observing that it was better to kill two birds with one stone.

But these plans were in some measure doomed to be disconcerted; for when Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle entered their

sitting-room, their visual organs made them aware of the fact that the chair on the one side of the fire was occupied by Mr. Jeremiah Scuttle, and the chair on the other side by Mr. Hook Walker. The latter gentleman was busily engaged in discussing a sandwich and a pint of Madeira which he had prudently ordered for his own benefit, and at Mr. Pickwick's expense; and the former was as sedulously occupied in the perusal of Mr. Pickwick's note-book which had accidentally been left upon the mantel-piece.

"How do you do, gentlemen?" enquired Mr. Hook Walker, rising slowly from his chair, and disposing of his last glass of Madeira: "you see that it is a part of my system to make myself comfortable."

"So I perceive," said Mr. Pickwick, somewhat abruptly.

"Ah! Mr. Pickwick—Mr. Tupman—Mr. Winkle, how are you?" exclaimed Mr. Scuttle. "God bless me! Why—I declare, that in a fit of absence I have been reading your private *memoranda*, my dear Sir!" he added, with a look of astonishment at the mysterious pocket-book he held in his hand.

"Oh! never mind," cried the good-natured Mr. Pickwick, his conscience experiencing a slight twinge of remorse for the beating he had bestowed upon Mr. Scuttle on a certain occasion.

"However—you know how absent I am!" continued Mr. Scuttle. "Indeed it was only yesterday morning that I was going to add fresh fuel to the fire in my study, and what do you think I did?"

"Let the fire go out, I suppose," said Mr. Pickwick with a smile at the supposed shrewdness of his guess.

"No such thing, my dear Sir," said Mr. Scuttle. "I put a chunk of wood, with my spectacles on it, in my easy-chair, and threw myself on the fire as a back log. Luckily there was no flame—or else I might have been burnt to death."

"Very true," coincided Mr. Pickwick. "Therefore, if you're so imprudent with regard to yourself, I beg you not to mind the inadvertency you have just committed relative to my *memoranda*."

"Well—that is kind of you," said Mr. Scuttle, resuming his seat. "I took the liberty of calling upon you—for you must know that I don't live here any longer; I took lodgings about eight or ten days ago—for the purpose of inviting you and your friends to a small party next Monday at my niece's residence in the Rue Taitbout—Chaussée d'Autin—if you be not better engaged." There was no allusion as yet to the memorable combat which had taken place in Mr. Pickwick's chamber, as detailed in a preceding chapter.

Mr. Tupman thought that the niece must be a young, and very probably a pretty woman: he therefore hastened to accept of the invitation on his own account, suggesting, at the same time, that he did not think his friends would be otherwise occupied. To this bold assertion Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle assented; and Mr. Scuttle was enchanted at the success of his mission; indeed, it appeared that he had quite forgotten the disagreeable adventure alluded to above.

"My niece is a widow, Mr. Pickwick," said Mr. Scuttle, while Mr. Tracy Tupman heaved a deep sigh: "her name is Weston—Mrs. Weston—and a very handsome person she is too, I flatter myself," continued Mr. Scuttle, to the unutterable delight of the late admirer of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage. "This is her card—I shall

leave it, in case you forget the address;"—and the card was accordingly entrusted to the secure keeping of the looking-glass frame forthwith.

"And now for *my* business," said Mr. Hook Walker, who had maintained a deep and evidently systematic silence during the progress of the interesting conversation ere now detailed; "and this is what it is. I believe, Mr. Pickwick," pursued Mr. Walker, turning leisurely round in his chair, so as to confront the gentleman whom he thus addressed in measured terms, "I believe that you are excessively fond of the National Airs of France, or of any thing connected with the Emperor Napoleon."

"I have a predilection that way," returned Mr. Pickwick with a smile.

"I know it," said Mr. Walker; "I know it. A man of your talent, Mr. Pickwick, must feel interested in these matters: it is a part of the system of every person of taste and education. And with these impressions I have ventured to procure a translation of one of De Berenger's most popular airs for your perusal. It was my intention to have invited you all to dine with me on Monday next—but—" and Mr. Walker hesitated as he glanced towards Mr. Scuttle.

"Oh! you are very kind, indeed," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick; "but as we cannot have the pleasure of dining with you on Monday, for reasons with which you are now acquainted, perhaps you and Mr. Scuttle would favour us with your company to-day?"

Mr. Scuttle, who, though an eccentric man, was neither a selfish one nor an adventurer, declined the invitation on the plea of prior engagements: but Mr. Hook Walker, whose economical and systematic arrangements it exactly suited, immediately declared his willingness to pass the day with Mr. Pickwick and his companions. Mr. Scuttle shortly rose and took his leave; and Mr. Hook Walker then produced the poem, for the gift of which he had succeeded in obtaining the only remuneration he required—viz. a dinner.

"Shall I read it to you now," enquired Mr. Walker, deliberately unfolding a small roll of papers, "or wait till the evening?"

"I should like very much to hear it at once, if you please," said Mr. Pickwick, not at all sorry to have acquired the reputation of a patron of the Muses in addition to his other distinguishing and numerous qualifications, some of which he had obtained at an equally cheap rate, like many of the men in power at the present day.

"It is translated by the same young friend who gave me the *Marseillaise*," said Mr. Walker. "He is a clever fellow in his way—and as he is not over rich, Mr. Pickwick, it is a part of my system to patronise him to the utmost of my power."

So, indeed, it was, for Mr. Walker did not fail to breakfast every other morning, and dine twice a week, with the poetic object of his kind solicitude; and in addition to these marks of favour and friendship, he not unfrequently borrowed a few francs by way of strengthening the disinterested ties that rendered them almost a second Pythias and Damon.

Mr. Walker, perceiving that his audience was anxiously awaiting the commencement of the air, cleared his throat in the most approved style usually adopted by orators on the public hustings at elections in

England, and read in a solemn tone the following translation of De Berenger's admired production.

THE REMINISCENCES OF THE PEOPLE

France shall sing Napoleon's glory
In the humble cot for ever;—
Fifty summers hence she'll never
Listen to a stranger's story.
At eve shall meet each village swain,
To hear some aged crone recite
The deeds of other days again,
And thus to wile away the night.
"Well," they say, "the nation's heart
Constant clings to Bonaparte;
Him we adore!
Mother, speak of him once more,—
Oh! speak once more!"

"—It was in my youthful day—
Many since that one have flown—
That the great Napoleon
Pass'd the cot in grand array.
I laboured hard to climb the hill,
For I was drest in garments gay;—
Methinks I see his cock'd hat still,
And riding coat of homely gray.
When he came, I shook with fear;
But he said, 'Good day, my dear!'
So kindly too!"
"—Mother, then he notic'd you—
He notic'd you!"

"—Scarce a year had pass'd away,
When I saw his princely train,
And Napoleon once again:—
To the church he went that day.
And they were blythe and happy all,
Thro' crowds admiring moving on;
While thousands cried, 'May blessings fall
From heav'n on Gallia's fav'rite son!'
Sweet the royal champion smil'd,
For he thought upon his child,
The infant dear!"
"—Mother, 'twas a glorious year,
A glorious year!"

"—Then, when battle rag'd around,
When opprest by foreign foes,
Braving danger, he arose—
He to succour France was found!
One night—I never shall forget—
A knocking led me to the door;
Great God! mine eyes Napoleon's met,
Follow'd by gorgeous trains no more.
In the chair where I am seated,
Sate the Hero, and repeated

Words of despair!"
"—Mother, what! is that the chair—
Indeed the chair?"

"—He by hunger was opprest;—
Sorry food could I provide;
Then his dripping clothes he dried,
And obtain'd a partial rest.
At length awaking from his dreams,
He mark'd the tears of sorrow fall:
'Be calm,' he cried, 'for fortune beams
As yet upon the land of Gaul!'
Here's the goblet whence his lip
Deign'd my humble wine to sip,
Forgotten never!"
"—Mother, you will keep it ever—
Will keep it ever!"

"—Yes! Behold—regard it well!
He, whose head a Pope had blest,
By his foemen was opprest—
In a distant isle he fell!
France, tir'd of hope, believ'd at last
He ne'er could come her rights to save;
And now the ocean must be pass'd
By those who wish to mark his grave.
When the tidings met my ears,
Frequent were my bitter tears
My grief to tell!"
"—Mother, Heaven keep thee well—
God keep thee well!"

Mr. Walker placed his manuscript upon the table without comment, and Mr. Pickwick wiped away a tear. The simplicity of this brief sketch of the life of the greatest man that ever lived—the chorus of the enthusiastic peasants at the conclusion of each stanza—and the pious veneration for the memory of the mighty conqueror that is everywhere apparent in the "aged crone's" narrative, were affecting in the extreme. There is no national air in the sphere of English literature that can compete with, or even approach the "Reminiscences of the People,"* by De Berenger.

In the course of the afternoon, Mr. Walker recollected that he had a visit to pay in the immediate neighbourhood of the hotel, and accordingly withdrew for an hour or so to accomplish that purpose. Mr. Pickwick and his friends seized the welcome opportunity thus afforded them for writing their several letters to England; and while he was thus employed, Mr. Tupman more than once reflected within himself upon the probability of Mr. Hook Walker's return to dinner. But when all the clocks in Paris began to inform the inhabitants of that gay city that it was precisely six P. M., Mr. Hook Walker and the dinner made their appearance simultaneously.

"We propose going to the opera this evening, if it's agreeable to you," said Mr. Pickwick, addressing himself to Mr. Walker and to the wing of a boiled fowl at the same time.

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* *Les Souvenirs du Peuple.*

"Decidedly," exclaimed that gentleman, as he raised a glass of claret to his lips and imbibed the contents: "I shall have much pleasure in accompanying you. It is a most remarkable *item* in the component parts of my system to visit the theatres as often as possible."

"Is the opera far from here?" enquired Mr. Tupman, already enchanted with the idea of gazing upon the fair countenances and bewitching forms of the Parisian ladies.

"Oh! no," returned Mr. Walker, "Rue Lepelletier—not a quarter of an hour's drive from the hotel."

"And do you go drest?" asked Mr. Tupman, thinking of his kerseymere tights and dress coat lined with white silk.

"Just as you are—it is only the actresses that are half naked," answered Mr. Hook Walker.

"And are the operas themselves very splendid?" enquired Mr. Winkle, by way of saying something, for he wisely thought silence to be the very representative of stupidity.

"So splendid," said Mr. Walker, "that it very often costs the manager upwards of five or six thousand pounds to bring out one opera, without taking into consideration the after expenses to be incurred; for, according to the French laws, the author and composer receive twenty pounds a night between them for each time that their piece is represented at the Royal Academy of Music."

"They are well paid, then, I should think," suggested Mr. Pickwick, who had just been wondering whether there were any murders and robberies in the French operas.

"You may say that," exclaimed Mr. Walker with a smile, "if you like. For *Robert le Diable*, Meyerbeer received from the director of the Opera-house no less than fifteen hundred and eighty pounds sterling for having composed the music; and Scribe, the author of the poem, was paid a similar sum. They then both sold their copyrights to their publishers, and were again largely remunerated; and every time the opera is performed in any theatre in France, they receive ten pounds each. This is indeed a lucrative system."

Mr. Tupman thought that it was certainly a little better than Mr. Walker's; but he did not embody his opinions in words. Mr. Pickwick sought for farther information relative to the French stage; and as Mr. Walker was fully capable of giving it, the note-book received many considerable additions in the shape of *memoranda* on the following morning.

"I wonder how the director or manager of the opera can make it answer," said Mr. Pickwick, "if he's obliged to pay so dearly for his actors and actresses as well as for his authors."

"Nor more he could," explained Mr. Walker. "But as the Royal Academy of Music is a sort of national institution—more or less—the government allows the lessee a million of francs—or forty thousand pounds—*per annum*, for the support of the house."*

"God bless me!" said Mr. Pickwick, pouring out a bumper in the excitement caused by this information, and swallowing both at about the same period.

The dinner and the time had passed away so agreeably during the above conversation, that scarcely had the dessert and champagne made

* Facts.

their appearance when it was deemed prudent to get ready for departure. The waiter was accordingly desired to tell Mr. Weller to fetch a coach forthwith; and in ten minutes the last-named gentleman returned with the pleasing information that "number von thousand and von vos a-vaitin'."

"That's right," said Mr. Pickwick, leaping gaily from his chair, and hastening to possess himself of his hat. But when he proceeded to investigate the place where he had left it, he found that his own was gone, and that a most grotesquelooking substitute had been left instead. "What can this mean?" thought Mr. Pickwick within himself; and he scrutinized the strange beaver with a look of the most unmitigated disgust. It was a tall, narrow-brimmed, conical-shaped hat, and bore a very strong resemblance to an inverted flower-pot.

"Vot's the matter now, Sir?" enquired Mr. Weller, suspecting that there was something wrong, and deeming it prudent to interfere.

"This is not my hat, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, peevishly.

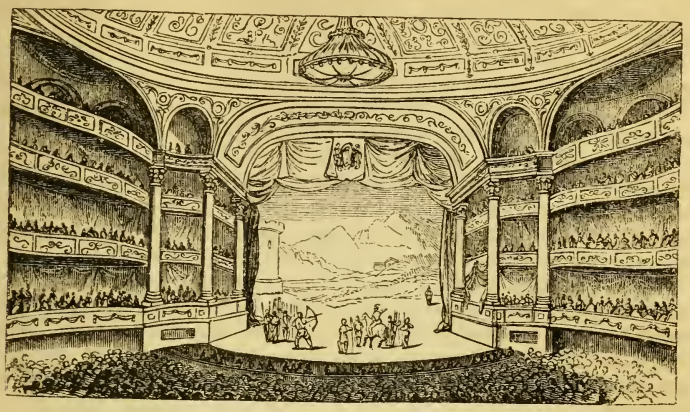
"Ain't it raly, though?" cried Mr. Weller. "No more it ain't. Vell—if ever I see such a rig in all my life, I'm blow'd. But arter all, that there thatch is a new von; and here's somethin' written in it too, as the young lady observed ven the post-man give her the Walentine."

Mr. Weller had taken the hat in his hands during the progress of his critical remarks; and now holding it up to the light, he saw printed on the lining thereof, in tolerably long letters, the words—"Jeremiah Scuttle." Thus was the mystery at once unravelled: and as Mr. Pickwick had now lost the only two hats he had brought from England with him—one in a ditch, and the other on Mr. Scuttle's head—and that which he had purchased at Boulogne being of a more *outré* shape than even the one his domestic now held in his hand, he was obliged to yield to necessity and adorn his *cranium* with Mr. Scuttle's property for the present. The circumstance was the origin of a considerable quantity of laughter, particularly on the part of Mr. Weller, who, in the height of facetiousness, was pleased to liken his illustrious master to a "moveable stack of chimbleys, vith von chimbly-pot on the top." To the opera, however, did Mr. Pickwick proceed, in the company of Mr. Hook Walker, Mr. Tracy Tupman, and Mr. Nathaniel Winkle.

Nothing can exceed the astonishment, the admiration and delight of our three travellers—for Mr. Walker was already familiar with the scene—when the splendour of the Opera-house burst upon them as they burst into it. The boxes were filled with fashionable and many lovely persons—plumes waved—bright eyes met the glance in all directions—and the component parts of the whole appeared to be magnificence, light, and beauty.

Thanks to the good management of Mr. Walker, the four gentlemen were speedily accommodated with as many convenient seats in one of the boxes precisely fronting the stage; and when the screen—for in France the shabby green curtain is universally eschewed—was drawn up, the raptures of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle knew no bounds. The opera was *William Tell:* the charms of the

actresses were set off to advantage by the Swiss costume they wore; and the scenery inimitably represented the stupendous mountains, the



laughing valleys, the bright cascades, the cottages and the meadows which form the varied attractions of the land whose darling hero's exploits were then being represented in miniature, but with truth. At some periods during the development of the piece, there were not less than two hundred individuals upon the stage. The apple was duly shot from the head of the boy by the principal actor in the performance; and enthusiastic was the applause that followed this exhibition of skill and unerring aim. Beautiful were the voices of the actresses as they mixed with the harmony created by a hundred and fifty musicians in the orchestra; and graceful was the dance in which the Swiss peasant girls joined at certain intervals. At length the piece was terminated, and then began that splendid exhibition of moveable scenery for which the Royal Academy of Music is so justly celebrated. A perfect panorama of Switzerland was thus displayed to the audience, till the eye became sated with the contemplation of such gorgeous landscapes.

"It was about half-past eleven o'clock when our little party emanated from the doors of the Royal Opera, well pleased with the entertainment they had witnessed. At such an advanced hour the theatres in Paris are generally closed, or actually about to break up; it was therefore ridiculous to attempt to obtain admittance to any one of them. Mr. Walker's ingenuity, however, speedily found a substitute for that enjoyment in proposing a small supper at the Café Anglais—a hint that was immediately adopted by the three gentlemen to whom it was addressed. To the Café Anglais did they accordingly repair; and in a few minutes a dish of oysters—a lobster—a broiled fowl—and an *omelette aux fines herbes* were ready for their discussion in a *cabinet particulier*, or private sitting-room, under the sagacious auspices of Mr. Walker himself.

"I have scarcely ever been so much amused at a theatre in the whole course of my life," said Mr. Winkle, extricating his forefinger

from between the pincers formed by the extremities of the claw of the lobster.

"Nor I," said Mr. Tupman, swallowing an oyster, and looking very sentimental thereupon. "What lovely figures the French ladies have!"

"To be sure they have," exclaimed Mr. Walker. "But it is a part of their system to dress well; and art assists nature, you know."

"Certainly!" assented Mr. Tupman, whose waist was not however improved by the extreme tightness of his waistcoat.

Mr. Winkle sighed as he called to mind the sporting-dress which the wishes of his friends and the earnest entreaties of his wife had induced him to eschew—and in his retrospective dreams he marked the period when the elegantly-fitting green jacket made him look more like a fairy's husband than a common and moderate Christian.

"Yes," continued Mr. Hook Walker; "the French ladies are certainly the best-dressed women in Europe; and if they be not the most beautiful, they are decidedly the most fascinating and pleasing. They have a certain winning way about them which never fails to attract, and which originates for a husband or lover a constant variety and change."

"And the young Frenchmen themselves," said Mr. Pickwick, "are all bows and smiles. Who could imagine, for one moment, that their prototypes were the heroes of those sanguinary deeds committed in times when the *guillotine* seldom desisted from its labour?" added the learned man, flourishing the leg of a fowl around his head in the excitement of his feelings, to the imminent peril and alarm of Mr. Winkle, who gazed at his leader in speechless astonishment.

"You allude to the first revolution," said Mr. Walker, always ready to display his erudition or amuse his companions, from the very simple motive of obtaining renewed invitations to dinner, supper, &c.; "and even in those stormy times may you find instances of forbearance and kindness on the parts of those whose enormities we cannot contemplate otherwise than with horror. It is a part of my system to cherish the recollection of good actions."

"I am not very conversant with French history," said Mr. Pickwick, who had now disposed of the leg of the fowl to the inexpressible delight of Mr. Winkle; "but I certainly should feel glad to be reminded of any bright ray that gilds an horizon so dark and gloomy."

Messieurs Tupman and Winkle gazed upon their companion in travel with feelings of veneration and awe, as he uttered this sublime idea; and Mr. Walker remained silent for a moment, apparently absorbed in thought.

"What!" at length exclaimed that gentleman, awakening from his reverie; "do you not recollect the affecting tale connected with the terrible Public Accuser, Fouquier Tinville—that friend to murder—to oppression—to cruelty? Do you not call to mind his forbearance on one particular occasion?"

Mr. Pickwick declared that he did not; and Mr. Walker, having duly solicited and obtained the consent of the three gentlemen to prolong the evening's entertainment for another half-hour, related a true and deeply interesting tale, the substance of which will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PUBLIC ACCUSER.—A TALE.

MARGUERITE D'ERMANVILLE.—THE RENDEZ-VOUS.—THE EVENT.

I HAVE not selected the anecdote that will be developed in the progress of this tale, for the purpose of making a pedantic display of my extensive acquaintance with French history, but merely to furnish an interesting specimen of "the deeds that were done" by the principal agents of the Revolution in the Reign of Terror.

Fouquier-Tinville was seated in his private *cabinet*, busily employed in the examination of certain documents that lay spread out before him upon the table. His countenance wore an expression of austerity that rendered his appearance terrible in the eyes of those who sought his presence for the usually fruitless purpose of supplicating a favour on the part of some accused friend. Seldom was it that Fouquier-Tinville mingled sentiments of benevolence and mercy with the details of the *proces-verbal* it was his duty to present to the Revolutionary Tribunal. His eloquence was invariably directed against the life of him whom he indicted; and his arguments were deemed more persuasive in ensuring a fellow-creature's doom, than the memorable words of the Roman senator who concluded every paragraph of his oration with the terrible injunction—"*Delenda est Carthago!*"

Fouquier-Tinville, the Public Accuser, had been employed about an hour in the careful scrutiny of the various papers that lay before him, when a low knock at the door of the *cabinet* for a moment diverted his attention from the study in which he had been absorbed. He desired the individual, who thus disturbed him, to enter; and when Lafleur, his faithful page, presented himself, the republican said sternly, "What, Lafleur! despite of my strict orders, my privacy is thus invaded! Am I never to enjoy a moment's tranquillity?"

"May it please Citizen Fouquier-Tinville," replied the page submissively, "a young person, who refuses to deliver her name, insists upon being indulged with a private audience—"

"Admit her," cried the Public Accuser, hastily cutting short Lafleur's story, and waving his hand impatiently. The command was immediately obeyed, and a lovely young female, of about eighteen, was ushered into the room. Lafleur retired as soon as this ceremony was performed, and Fouquier-Tinville desired his beautiful visitor to be seated and explain the nature of her business. The stranger hesitated as if she were at a loss how to reply; and probably over-awed at finding herself in the presence of the dreaded functionary of the Revolutionary Tribunal, as well as instinctively to place herself in an attitude befitting one who has a boon to solicit, she sank upon her knees at the republican's feet, and suffered her head to repose upon her breast. Her long luxuriant hair fell in graceful ringlets over shoulders and a neck of dazzling whiteness; and the position of the lovely girl enabled the licentious glance of Fouquier-Tinville to catch "short glimpses of a breast of snow." Her figure was modelled in the most faultless symmetry; her clasped hands were diminutive and

fair; and her feet and ankles were small, even to girlish proportions. For some moments the Public Accuser gazed in rapture upon the beauteous creature thus bent down before him; and she, on her part, did not interrupt the silence that prevailed.

"Rise, *citoyenne*," said Fouquier-Tinville, at length feeling the embarrassment of their mutual situations; "and be not afraid to make me acquainted with the object of your visit."

The stranger obeyed this species of command, that was nevertheless delivered in a tone of voice intended to be soothing; and when she raised her head, and stood before the Public Accuser with innocence and candour depicted upon her heavenly countenance, he thought he had never before gazed on aught so lovely. Her dark black eyes were replete with all the fire and vivacity that virgin chastity and sorrow could not even entirely suppress; her red lips apart disclosed a set of the whitest teeth; the symmetry of her bust and sylph-like waist were displayed to the greatest advantage; and her appearance seemed to partake rather of celestial than terrestrial origin. The Public Accuser's heart beat quickly, as he gazed upon those ravishing beauties.

"What is thy name, *citoyenne?*" he enquired, perceiving that his fair visitor's timidity almost tied up her tongue.

"Marguerite d'Ermanville," was the reply.

"Ah!" exclaimed Fouquier-Tinville, with a start of surprise: "meseems, that name is not entirely strange to me, nor unfamiliar to my ears."

"My father is a retired merchant and well known at Nantes," said Marguerite, fancying that her words conveyed a suggestion not to be misunderstood.

"True!" cried the republican, turning to one of the papers he had been examining a few minutes before; "your father, *citoyenne*, is unhappily included amongst those two hundred and thirty prisoners whom citizen Carrier sent to Paris, some eight or ten days ago, to be tried at the tribunal appointed by the Committee of Public Safety for the purpose."

"This I know already, citizen Tinville," said the heroic girl; "and it is to procure an alleviation of the miseries now endured by my unfortunate parent, that I have ventured to intrude myself upon your notice."

"My authority extends not to a mitigation—"

"That also I am aware of," interrupted Marguerite. "The trial must take its course; but the health of my already sufficiently afflicted father need not be offered up as an additional sacrifice to the fanatic enthusiasm of my misguided countrymen."

"Maiden," said Fouquier-Tinville sternly, "those words, uttered by another mouth than thine, had been the self-accusation of an audacious fool."

"Pardon me, citizen—but sorrow has made me reckless of my life."

"What is thy request, then, *belle citoyenne?*" enquired the Public Accuser, taking her hand, which she did not attempt to withdraw.

"The two hundred and thirty *Nantois* are perishing in the prisons of the Luxembourg," said Marguerite d'Ermanville. "A dangerous

epidemic disease rages amongst them—my father is sorely afflicted with the malady—we have applied in various quarters to procure his removal to the hospital of the *Hotel Dieu*—and, having failed, were referred to you."

"You ask no more!" ejaculated the Public Accuser, astonished at the smallness of the maiden's demand.

"No more," was the answer; "and if I be successful in obtaining the grant of this boon, my heart will be relieved from a heavy load."

"It may be done—it *is* possible to accomplish it," said Fouquier-Tinville, musing, and revolving a hellish project in his mind. "But," he added, suddenly, "you said '*we* applied in various quarters,'—to whom did you allude?"

"To my mother and myself," replied Marguerite, a tear trickling down her beautiful cheek.

"'Tis well," observed Tinville; and he paused for some moments, during which he threw himself on his chair, appeared desirous of communicating his wishes to the innocent girl, and yet dared not address her in a disrespectful manner. "Call to-morrow morning, *citoyenne*—and I will decide," at length exclaimed the Public Accuser, an evanescent flush passing over his countenance—"to-morrow, at one o'clock precisely—and fail not to be punctual."

"A father's life depends upon my punctuality," cried the admirable daughter: "fear not any delay on *my* part."

"Stay—," said the republican, after another moment's reflection: "come not hither—I have my reasons, *citoyenne*—but meet me on the terrace that overlooks the Seine, in the Gardens of the Tuileries."

"I will be there," returned Marguerite, a gleam of joy passing over her countenance: "depend upon my punctuality—I will be there!"—and with these words, which she repeated several times, she curtsied profoundly and took her leave of one whom public report had represented to her as the most unbending and inaccessible of men, and whose presence she had at first sought with sentiments of horror as profound as those with which she would have approached the den of a venomous serpent or rabid animal.

Delighted with the reception she had experienced, and the prospect of alleviating the sufferings of a beloved father, however great might be the price she would be doomed to pay, Marguerite d' Ermanville issued from the hotel of the Public Accuser with a light heart and airy tread. She crossed the Pont des Arts, traversed the large parallelogram of the Louvre, and turned into the Rue Saint Honoré, down which she walked a few paces in the direction of the Halle. Presently she stopped at the gate of a house of modest appearance,—looked up to assure herself that she had not mistaken the number, and entered the building in which the apartments occupied by herself and mother were situate. Those apartments were on the fifth floor, and thither the beautiful girl hastily mounted with the same light heart and airy tread as when she retired from the presence of Fouquier-Tinville. The door was opened by a lady, who had probably numbered forty summers, and who immediately saluted Marguerite by the appellation of 'Daughter!"

"My boon will be granted, dearest mother!" cried the amiable girl,

as they both hastened into the modest sitting-room which formed a portion of the *suite* inhabited by them. "My boon will be granted,—the Public Accuser is not so terrible as we were led to believe, and to-morrow I am to meet him on the terrace of the Tuileries."

"Oh! my dear—dear—unhappy daughter!" cried Madame d'Ermanville, hiding her face with her hands, and sobbing bitterly; for her only hope was now placed in a kind Providence.

"What, mother?" exclaimed Marguerite, rising—for she too well comprehended the cause of her parent's fears; "do you think that I will now flinch from that duty I have imposed upon myself? Do you imagine my heart to be so weak that I will not encounter any danger,—when my poor father's life is in jeopardy? Full well did I know the fatal price that will be required to release my father, and my resolves were—and are still—as inflexible as the ancient laws of the Persians and Medes! He took my hand—I did not withdraw it: he gazed upon me with an eye of desire, and I refrained from reproach! Relying on the interposition of Divine Providence, I feel assured I shall remain spotless and chaste."

"Noble-minded girl!" cried Madame d'Ermanville, whose face was wet with tears wrung from her eyes by feelings of bitterest agony: "and wouldest thou hazard all thy young hopes and golden dreams, and suffer them to be withered by the glance of a monster! O Marguerite—Marguerite—my dear, dear daughter!"—and the unhappy parent fell upon the neck of her only child, and poured forth the effusion of her sorrows on that devoted being's bosom.

"Mother," said the heroic girl, endeavouring to stifle her own grief, the better to soothe her parent's woes,—"mother—dear mother—this is unworthy of you: an imperious necessity urges me onward; to-morrow will decide the fate of your daughter. Who knows but that, through a gracious Providence, even the flinty heart of Fouquier-Tinville may relent, and that he will assist the sick prisoner on account of his child's tears, and not at the price of her honour?"

"Vain hope—alas! dear Marguerite," sighed Madame d'Ermanville, sinking into a seat, and fruitlessly essaying to dry her tears. "The Public Accuser knows not the name of 'Mercy.' That word has long been banished from the political, and even the private dictionary of this unhappy land. My heart is nearly broken, Marguerite—but thine, dear child—how will it support all the horrors that are in store for thee?"

"Enough—dear mother; terrify me not by gloomy anticipation. I again assure you, as solemnly as if I were standing before my Maker, that nothing can change the determination I have adopted. So, dry those tears, dear mother—stifle those sighs—and remember that your child will render herself worthy of her parents; for she can make that sacrifice which thousands would deem the most deadly of all disgrace!"

"And Emile de Gaston—" said Madame d'Ermanville.

"Ah! mention not *that* name!" cried Marguerite, a fearful pallor overspreading her lovely countenance: "him must I renounce for ever!"

"Poor Emile!" returned the unfortunate mother as she contem-

plated the approaching wreck of all her daughter's fondest designs and wishes: "little does he think, while away—and fighting the battles of his country—little does he suspect—"

"Mother—would'st thou drive me mad?" exclaimed Marguerite, clasping her hands together in all the wildness of sorrow and despair. "Let me repel the advance of reflection—let me shun thought—let me not hear the name of one whose love I must renounce for ever!"

"O God! where is thy justice? does thine omniscience sleep?" cried Madame d' Ermanville, whose mental sufferings were almost too great for human nature to support.

"Blaspheme not," said Marguerite solemnly: "haply the Almighty has not yet abandoned us!"

It were in vain to endeavour to depict the wretchedness that filled the bosoms of those two unhappy women. Nor would it be possible to say how they passed the remainder of that day, and the ensuing night. A sleepless couch was doubtless pressed by either, and each pillow was watered with an abundance of heart-wrung tears. The morning dawned gay and jocund upon their sorrow, as it were in derision; and the sun was bright, and nature was blythe and sportive, as if to mock the anguish that gnawed at the heart's core of a miserable mother and a daughter whom Hope had nearly forsaken.

The morning's repast was scarcely touched, and hardly a word was spoken on either side. Grief with them was now dumb—their wounds were deep, but the orifice was barely perceptible. An occasional exchange of looks betokening unutterable horror—occasional sighs, and occasional tears—were all that indicated the acuteness of a woe reciprocally felt. Hour after hour passed away; and at length mid-day was proclaimed by the iron tongue of the clock at the Loûvre. Marguerite started at the sound—hastily rose from her seat—and hurried to her bed-room to arrange her toilet. A quarter of an hour was thus expended—the self-devoted victim decked herself out for slaughter—not in the meretricious garb of an alluring coquette—but in the sober and modest vestments befitting a maiden who might be almost said to resemble Jephthah's daughter, the one being sacrificed by the commands of an imperious necessity, the other by those of a father,—the one issuing forth to save a father, the other condemned by a father—but both sufferers on account of those fathers!

Not a tear stood in Marguerite's eye as she bade adieu to her heart-broken mother. An unnatural calmness pervaded her countenance—a placidity, that was in itself terrible to gaze upon, usurped the seat of a more expressive agony.

"Oh! no—thou shalt not go—thou must not leave me—stay—Oh! stay—quit not the mother who bore you!" cried the distracted parent, as she folded her votive daughter in an agonizing embrace. "Stay—Marguerite—rush not upon destruction—death, for us all, will be preferable to your dishonour—Oh! stay—stay!"

"Mother!" said Marguerite in a tone scarcely audible, and rendered hoarse with inward emotion: "again I say that my resolves are inflexible—a father's existence depends upon my courage—filial duty has charged me with an important mission—and that vicarious task shall not be neglected."

"You go, then, Marguerite—you go—and I am to mourn the loss of my daughter's honour! Oh! Marguerite—my child—my child!"

Mademoiselle d' Ermanville imprinted one more kiss on the lips of her disconsolate mother—the clock at the Loûvre struck the half-hour—she summoned their only domestic to take charge of her parent—and, with a firm step, hastened out of the room. During her short walk to the appointed place of *rendez-vous*, she did not once waver in her intentions—her mind was nerved to rescue a father whom she adored!

Arrived on the terrace, Marguerite sank almost exhausted upon a seat; and scarcely had she time to collect her scattered ideas, re-inforce her courage by all the arguments her imagination and filial piety could suggest, and prepare herself to receive the addresses of the Public Accuser, when Fouquier-Tinville made his appearance at her side.

"*C'est bien, belle Marguerite*," said the republican functionary, as he took the hand of the trembling girl, who was astonished—even in the intense agony of the moment—to observe that *his* hand also trembled. "I was afraid—that is, I thought—" and for the first time in his life, Fouquier-Tinville was at a loss to find words to express his ideas.

"You were afraid that I should not keep my appointment," said Marguerite, a ray of hope darting across her mind, when she again remarked the agitation of the Public Accuser.

"That, in fact, was the subject of my alarm, *belle citoyenne*," muttered Fouquier-Tinville; "but I find that—"

"That your fears were unfounded, citizen," added Marguerite; then, in a tone of extreme bitterness, she said, "Knowest thou not that the life of a father is so precious to his daughter that she will make any sacrifice that will eventually contribute to a parent's welfare?"

"My ears are unused to lessons of morality, *jeune demoiselle*," said the republican, relinquishing the fair hand he held in his, and rising from the stone bench on which he had been seated; "let us make the best of the present moment. I propose that we shall proceed to the Café ———, and there partake of a slight repast."

"I am ready to obey your orders," rejoined Marguerite, also rising, and accepting the proffered arm of Fouquier-Tinville, who led her towards that extremity of the terrace, whence a flight of steps enabled them to descend upon the quay.

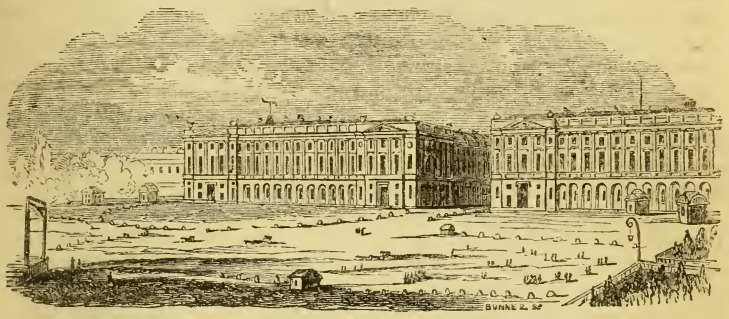
"Wherefore take this path?" enquired Marguerite, clinging to the arm of the Public Accuser as if destruction were at her heels.

"Oh! I had forgotten," cried the fierce republican, with a species of ironical smile: "but, no matter—since we have come so far, it would be ridiculous to turn back:"—and with these words the heartless ruffian dragged the almost fainting girl across that fatal spot on which the *guillotine* was erected, and which is to-day known as the Place Louis Seize.

There was the fatal instrument—the bright knife glittering in the rays of the meridian sun—the cords gently waving backward and forward to the breeze—the plank raised perpendicularly, as if in preparation for some victim about to be lashed to the moveable board—the narrow platform raised three feet above the level of the ground—and the heap

of sand beneath the exact spot where the hatchet fell on the neck of the condemned.

This horrible spectacle—the bloody *paraphernalia* of death—struck terror to the heart of Marguerite d' Ermanville. But Fouquier-Tinville trembled not—neither did he pretend to notice the pain his cruelty caused the unhappy girl whose charms he intended to immolate to his lusts. They passed by the frowning poles of the *guillotine*—they continued their way over the magnificent Place Louis



XVI., where a monarch had lately suffered, and where hundreds daily perished—they proceeded in the direction of the Palace of the Minister of the Marine, and pursued their course up the Rue Royale. The Public Accuser cast a scrutinizing glance around him—seemed satisfied that none of his acquaintances was nigh—and, having thus apparently tranquillized himself on that head, he led his companion to a private *cabinet* in the Café ———. A copious breakfast—*dejeuner à la fourchette*—or, to suit the appellation given to that meal in the English language, luncheon—was speedily served up, to which he himself did unequivocal honour, while Marguerite suffered the highly-seasoned meats to remain untouched on her plate, and the generous wines unsavoured in her glass.

"You do not justice to the fare I have provided for you, *belle citoyenne*," said Fouquier-Tinville, during an interval occasioned by the removal of a course and the preparation of another. "May I desire to be informed if—if—"

"My resolves are still unchanged," returned Marguerite, a slight blush animating her countenance which sorrow and alarm rendered deadly pale.

"Pledge me in a glass, sweet maid," cried the republican, as he tossed off a bumper of Champagne, and cast a familiar glance at his intended victim. "What! you refuse, Marguerite? Dost thou know that—"

But Fouquier-Tinville hesitated as before: an indescribable emotion—a sentiment of awe—invariably checked him when he was about to utter any thing indelicate or offensive. Marguerite was in appear-

ance, as well as in face, chastity itself: her very purity restrained the republican within certain bounds, and operated like a magic charm upon him. He was unaccustomed to such society—that halo of innocence—that perfume of chastity inspired him with a certain dread—an uneasiness he could not account for—a discomfort that increased every moment. He dared no longer gaze for any length of time upon that virgin countenance—he could not brook the tranquil but imploring look of her whose reputation he wished to destroy. His compliments were with difficulty conveyed in an intelligible manner—his tongue refused to give utterance to the words that his passion would have dictated—he, who expected to have been a conqueror, was himself conquered. His lion-heart, always thirsting after blood, sank in the presence of virgin innocence—his brain became confused—he repented of his cruelty—he could have fallen at the feet of the injured girl near him—he could have licked the dust on which she walked, to demonstrate his contrition. The usually haughty, uncompromising, remorseless republican was reduced to the submissiveness of a lamb by the majesty of beauty combined with purity and virtue!

"No!" said Fouquier-Tinville, starting from his chair, and striking the table forcibly with his clenched fist—"no, Marguerite! you shall depart from this place as chaste as when you entered it—and in the course of future years, there may be found at least one being who will have learnt to bless the Public Accuser!"

"Citizen Tinville, what mean you?" cried Mademoiselle d'Ermanville, unable to believe her own ears.

"I mean, *jeune demoiselle*," returned the republican, "that I will conduct you back to the terrace where we met—and that I will now hand you the document I intended to have given you when my desires should have been gratified;"—and with these words Fouquier-Tinville gave Marguerite a sealed paper.

The trembling girl opened the welcome envelope, and hastily glanced her eyes over the contents.

"Gracious heavens!" she exclaimed, falling upon her knees at the feet of the Public Accuser—"my father then is pardoned!"

"Yes," rejoined the republican functionary; "my interest with the members of the Revolutionary Tribunal was sufficient to ensure that single act of mercy."

"My benefactor—my best friend!" exclaimed the over-joyed maiden, grasping the hands of the individual at whose feet she knelt, while he himself wept plentifully, and for the first time; for it was the most delicious moment of his stormy life.

"Rise, Marguerite—rise!" cried Fouquier-Tinville, "and let us retrace our steps. My time is precious—and you, Mademoiselle, will be glad to communicate the pleasing intelligence of your father's release to the mother of whom you before spoke. Rise—for in an hour your parents shall reward your filial love; and, in future, think not that I shall be indifferent to your welfare. No—the Public Accuser will ever be happy to hear any good tidings concerning one who perhaps has some reason to be grateful to him."

"Some reason!" exclaimed the delighted Marguerite. Oh! so long as I live shall your kindness be remembered," nor will I ever fail to bless a gracious Providence."

The waiter was then summoned and paid, and Fouquier-Tinville reconducted Marguerite to the terrace where he had met her, and where he now bade her adieu. She essayed a repetition of all the expressions of gratitude her generous imagination could dictate; but he staid not to hear them, and waved his hand to her as he speedily withdrew from her presence.

What more have I now to relate? Marguerite returned to her mother, whose tears she speedily dried—and in the course of the evening Monsieur d'Ermanville was restored to the bosom of his family. Precisely three months after, Emile de Gaston espoused the beautiful and heroic girl; and the principal character that figured in the gay drawing-room of the ancient merchant's spacious abode at Nantes, was the Public Accuser!

Mr. Walker, having thus brought his interesting tale to a conclusion, was greeted with the unanimous thanks of his companions, who had listened in a state of painful anxiety to the narrative; and in less than half an hour the little party had broken up and returned to their respective abodes.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. TUPMAN ENCOUNTERS AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.—MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM AGAIN CUTS A CONSPICUOUS FIGURE IN THESE MEMOIRS.—PECUNIARY EMBARRASSMENTS, AND THE TRULY LAUGHABLE ADVENTURE THEY ENGENDER.—MR. TUPMAN ADOPTS A NOVEL COSTUME.

TIME—that space which Cicero designated as a small portion of eternity and which the English usually mark by certain daily potations of gin—time passed quickly away; and already was the day arrived on which the admired niece of Mr. Jeremiah Scuttle was to give her select *soirée*. On this memorable day, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle received letters from England, which obliged them to devote several hours to business; and Mr. Tupman, thus thrown, like an individual just ejected from a workhouse, on his own resources, was obliged to hold a consultation relative to the best mode of passing away the time that intervened between breakfast and dinner. The consultation was held in Mr. Tupman's own bed-room at the Hotel Meurice, and was as important as any meeting that has ever yet taken place at the "Crown and Anchor," in London. Mr. Tupman was the president—Mr. Tupman was the vice-president—Mr. Tupman was the speaker—and Mr. Tupman was the audience; and this quatuornity in unity determined to wander forth at hazard, and call a hackney-coach in case of extreme emergency.

Mr. Tupman walked jauntily up the Rue Saint Honoré; he stared at the pretty milliners in the shop at the corner of the Passage de l'Orme—he ogled the two Auvergnese sisters who sell comestibles in a little shed near the church of Saint Rocq—he smiled at an itinerant pastry-girl, who kept a stall at the corner of the Rue Traversiere—and he impressed the sentries at the Palais Royal with an idea of his great-

ness. Animated with the same spirit of enterprise that originated the voyages of Captain Parry and Sir John Ross, Mr. Tupman was determined to penetrate farther into the Rue Saint Honoré—the longest street but one in the world—and ascertain what might lie beyond the regions of the Palais Royal. Scarcely, however, had he passed the Rue Grenelle, when the noise of a diligence galloping up the street attracted his attention; and in due time he saw the vehicle turn into a handsome white free-stone gate-way, on the left hand side in the Rue Saint Honoré. Mr. Tupman immediately concluded that this must be the entrance to a coach-yard; and, thinking that he might as well see a diligence as any thing else, he entered the enclosure through the aforesaid gate-way, and instantaneously recognised the magnificent office of Laffitte and Caillard's *Messageries*.

But at the moment when he became aware of the locality in which he then was, his eyes encountered the fascinating form of a young lady a few yards before him. Mr. Tupman was determined to catch a glimpse of her features, just to see whether they corresponded in loveliness with the figure he so much admired; he accordingly redoubled his pace, and in a minute found himself in the presence of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the young lady, when her beautiful eyes caught sight of Mr. Tupman's portly form; "'tis Inglis gentelman me so long look for!"

"Indeed," said Mr. Tupman, with a polite though distant bow, uncertain in his own mind whether to give the young lady into custody or not.

"How you do, *Monsieur?*" enquired Anastasie with a winning smile. "Me so glad to see you—me so afraid you tink badly—but those gentelmen act vary foolish when they got the wine in the head."

Mr. Tupman could not help ogling the young lady as she thus addressed him in her fascinating broken English; and the young lady herself, perceiving her advantage, continued:—

"Me send you back watch by my servant—one nigger-man, you know, Sare—"

"I paid a considerable sum to recover it," said Mr. Tupman drily.

"You pay! Oh! no—dat not possible!" cried Anastasie, vehemently.

"I beg your pardon," rejoined Mr. Tupman. "A gentleman of the name of Vi—Vi—Vidocq, I think, was the agent in the transaction."

A flood of tears immediately deluged the fair cheeks of Mademoiselle Anastasie—she declared she had been duped and deceived, but did not condescend to explain the precise manner in which she was so deeply wronged—and commenced the enactment of as affecting a little piece of tragedy as ever one would wish to behold in a diligence-yard. Mr. Tupman prudently withdrew the weeping lady from the gaze of three dozen clerks, and as many porters: and led her into the adjoining coffee-room of the Hotel Rossignol. There, by the aid of a small quantity of consolation and a large quantity of spiced wine, Mademoiselle de Volage recovered herself so far as to grasp Mr. Tupman's hand convulsively, and assure him that he was her first and only love.

"You did not really then invite me to your house for dishonest purposes?" said Mr. Tracy Tupman, growing sentimental with wine and the tender passion.

"Oh! *mon Dieu*—no!" was the agonizing reply.

"And you have never been on the stage?"

A convulsive moan implied a negative.

"And—and—you never loved another?"

A terrific squeeze of the hand, which might have been meant for tenderness, conveyed a satisfactory answer.

"Nor were you the other day about to marry an English nobleman?"

"'Tis true Inglis nobleman ask me—but me love you," was the response.

"Nor—in a moment of weakness—that is, being deceived by a villain—"

"Oh! what make you tink dat?" interrupted the young lady, in a whisper; for, with most extraordinary penetration, she had evidently divined the nature of Mr. Tupman's intended question and implied suspicion.

Matters were now placed on so pleasant and comfortable a footing, that a slight luncheon was ordered, and an agreeable conversation ensued between the lovers thus easily reconciled. Indeed, Mr. Tupman was astonished at the turpitude of the world, when he reflected upon the manner in which the unblemished character of a virtuous young lady had been disparaged; and he almost suspected that the account given of her former life by Vidocq was the result of a trick to separate him from a being he adored. Such were the beautiful and truly rational sentiments which filled his imagination, as he discussed general topics and mutton-cutlets with Mademoiselle de Volage.

"And pray," said Mr. Tupman, when the *dejeuner* was cleared from the table, "what brought you in this quarter of the city?"

"Me leave Paris at five of de clock dis evening," replied Anastasie, in a voice rendered almost inaudible with emotion; "and me come to take place by diligence for St. Omers."

"Do you go alone?" enquired Mr. Tupman hastily.

"Alas! me obliged—my mother vary ill at her aunt's, the Countess von Strackenheim," answered the fair Anastasie; "and me have business with one great lord's wife at St. Omers."

Mr. Tupman appeared to reflect for a moment. He felt a lurking suspicion in his breast, that a conspiracy had been got up against him, to alienate his affections from his present companion; and he prudently resolved to show his friends that he was his own master, and at liberty to act as he chose in that as well as in every other matter. He accordingly made up his mind to accompany Mademoiselle de Volage to St. Omers.

Great men, when their minds are once bent upon a certain purpose, are invariably prompt in the execution of their schemes. They are above the every-day system of maturely reflecting on the prudence of their measures, and demonstrate the magnitude of their talents by the daring promptitude of their actions. So it was with Mr. Tracy Tupman. Five minutes were sufficient for that extraordinary and sagacious individual to communicate his plan to Mademoiselle Anastasie,

to combat her modest but ill-sustained objections, and to pay for a couple of seats in the *coupé* of the diligence that was to start the same evening for St. Omers. He then wrote a note to Mr. Pickwick, to inform his friend that business of urgent importance compelled him to leave Paris at a moment's warning, intending to consign it to the two-penny post just as the diligence should be about to start. When these admirable arrangements were completed, he accompanied his fair companion to the *Prefecture de Police*, for the purpose of having their passports signed for the place of their destination.

The hands of every clock in Paris moved gradually onwards, and at length the important hour arrived when it was necessary to seek the diligence-office, and ascend the steps of the front department of the diligence itself. The morning had passed away as rapidly as time usually flies in that or any other case; and Mr. Tupman hailed with delight the prospect of extending his travels, and of journeying in the society of one whom he was resolved in due season and place to install in the enviable position of Mrs. Tracy Tupman.

The five horses were attached to the vehicle—the conductor received his way-bill from the head clerk of the especial office to which he belonged—Mr. Tupman and Mademoiselle Anastasie were safely ensconced in their places, and the diligence was about to issue from the yard, when the arrival of another passenger caused it to stop for a moment. One seat only was vacant—and that was the third place in the *coupé*. The stranger accordingly secured it forthwith; but when he presented himself at the door, Mr. Tupman recognised, to his infinite dismay, the well-known form and features of Mr. Adolphus Crashem.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman; "I really—my dear Sir—"

"Don't disturb yourself, my dear fellow," interrupted Mr. Crashem—for so we shall continue to call him, inasmuch as so he chose to call himself—as he took a corner seat, and gave a nod of recognition to Mademoiselle de Volage, unperceived by that young lady's admirer.

"Very extraordinary encounter, this," observed Mr. Tupman, as the diligence rolled beneath the archway of the great gate in the Rue Grenelle.

"Vary," coincided Anastasie.

"Accident—pure accident, old fellow," cried Mr. Crashem. "I was obliged to give my respected sire the slip—he took me out of *quod*, you know, and wanted me to go back to England with him; but, deuce a bit—as Sir Thomas Grinwell used to say; I know several tricks each worth ten of that sort, and accordingly left him to shift for himself. But are you going to Calais?"

"No—Oh! no—I intend to stop—that is—" stammered Mr. Tupman.

"Don't be alarmed, my dear fellow," again interrupted Mr. Crashem. "I am going to St. Omers, and if I can assist any of your plans, I would sooner do so than mar them. Did you never hear of my adventures, when I ran away with the nineteenth daughter of the sixty-seventh sister of the great Cham of Tartary?"

Mr. Tupman was undecided how to answer this question. He certainly could not tax his memory with the incident alluded to; and he

fancied that his volatile friend entertained a shrewd suspicion relative to his adventure with the fair Anastasie. He therefore deemed it prudent to make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, an object he forthwith effected in the following original and exemplary manner.

"Crashem, your hand!" said Mr. Tupman in an emphatic tone of voice.

The required extremity was accordingly tendered to the individual who was reduced to it, and was long retained in a friendly grasp. An introduction between Mr. Crashem and Mademoiselle de Volage was then accomplished by the delighted Mr. Tracy Tupman, who might very well have spared himself the trouble, seeing that those two individuals were well acquainted with each other, and that their little jaunt to St. Omers together had not been at all disturbed in plan or execution by the fortuitous circumstance of the lady's having met Mr. Tupman in the manner before described.

"Ah! ah! I see—a love affair," exclaimed Mr. Crashem, when a whisper on the part of Mr. Tupman had put him in possession of those facts which he had already more than half divined. "Well," continued that strictly moral young gentleman, "as your intentions are upright and honourable, I don't care if I lend myself to the business. But we must stop at St. Omers, and preserve a strict *incog.*; and Mademoiselle may pass off as your sister. As soon as she has transacted her business in that town, we can all run over to Dover, where the marriage-knot may be tied—eh?"—and Mr. Crashem dug his fingers into Mr. Tupman's ribs, which facetious enactment caused them both to laugh heartily, while the object of their discourse concealed her blushes in a cambric pocket-handkerchief and a suppressed giggle.

"Admirable!" cried Mr. Tupman, rubbing his side with his right hand, and arranging his shirt-frill with the left.

"Just like my adventure with Sing-chang!" ejaculated Mr. Crashem, alluding to his love affair with the relative of the great Cham.

At this moment the diligence stopped to change horses at St. Denis, and Mr. Crashem assisted himself and his friends to a glass of brandy from a bottle he carried in the side-pocket of his mysterious rough blue coat. A considerable degree of persuasion was, however, required to induce Anastasie to refresh herself with the exhilarating fluid; and she afterwards declared that she could never have finished the whole glass had not a sudden jolt, occasioned by the starting of the diligence once more, urged the brandy down her delicate throat. Mr. Tupman felt it impossible not to adore a being so full of ingenuousness and candour; and Mr. Crashem added to the exciting pleasure of the moment by declaring it to be "a most excellent lark."

At about ten o'clock the diligence entered the little town of Clermont; and there the travellers partook of a cheap and moderate supper, their appetites being tested by the alternatives of coffee and bread-and-butter, or soup and sour wine. When the two friends and the young lady were, however, again seated in the *coupé*, they made their sorry fare an excuse for once more applying themselves to the brandy, Anastasie declaring that nothing but the acidity of the wine could have induced her even to smell "the horrid stuff" a second time. The effects of these potations were exhibited in an immense deal of laughter,

and an exceeding talkativeness on the part of all three; and Mr. Crashem, with a view to encourage the prevailing good-humour, volunteered and sang the following sentimental air, to the unspeakable delight of the passengers in the other departments of the vehicle.

SONG.

TUNE.—"*There is not in this wide world a valley so sweet.*"

There's not in all London a tavern so gay,
As that where the knowing ones meet of a day;
So long as a farthing remains to my share,
I'll drink at that tavern, and never elsewhere!

Yet it is not that comforts there only combine,
Nor because it produces good brandy and wine;
'Tis not the sweet odour of pipe nor cigar—
Oh! no—'tis a something more cozie by far!

'Tis that friends of the Hell and the Turf are all nigh,
Who'd drink till the cellar itself should be dry,
And teach you to feel how existence may please,
When pass'd in the presence of cronies like these.

Sweet Sign of the Fiddle! how long could I dwell
In thy tap full of smoke, with the friends I love well!
When bailiffs no longer the alleys infest,
And duns, like their bills, have relapsed into rest!

It were useless to detail the trivial events which occurred upon the road; or how the travellers fell asleep shortly after this beautiful air was brought to a conclusion—how they awoke on the following morning to find themselves at Amiens, where they breakfasted—how they dined at St. Pol at about three o'clock—and how they entered the strongly fortified town of St. Omers towards nine in the evening, after a journey that had occupied very nearly eight-and-twenty hours. The conductor was remunerated in the usual way by Mr. Tupman, for Mr. Adolphus Crashem entertained a striking and peculiar aversion to the office of official paymaster—the baggage was transferred from the top of the vehicle to the summit of a porter's back—the diligence proceeded towards Calais—and the three travellers hastened to the Hotel Canon d'Or, where three bed-rooms and a sitting-room were placed at their immediate disposal; and a good supper was ordered for purposes of subsequent discussion. For the attendance of that meal they were, however, obliged to wait three-quarters of an hour, at the expiration of which it was duly served up, and then the attendant waited upon them.

It is not our purpose to dwell minutely upon this portion of our narrative. Suffice it to say that Mr. Crashem took charge of the cash that had originally appertained to Mademoiselle de Volage, Mr. Tupman, and himself; and as none of them had carried away a treasure from the French metropolis, it cannot be wondered at if the exchequer were exhausted at the expiration of four days. They were now involved in a little dilemma, and were constrained to hold a consultation to resolve upon measures to extricate themselves from their difficulties.

Mr. Tupman could not write to his bankers in London, as he fancied that those gentlemen would be the very first to whom Mr. Pickwick would address himself relative to his absence; and Mr. Adolphus Crashem and Mademoiselle Anastasie, with the best of all possible inclinations, had no bankers to write to. It was therefore suggested by Mr. Crashem that Mr. Tupman should consign his watch to the custody "of his uncle."

"I would willingly do so, my dear friend," exclaimed Mr. Tupman, "but I have not a single relative—much less an uncle, in the whole town."

Mr. Adolphus Crashem indulged in a hearty laugh, and then condescended to explain himself by declaring that he had alluded to the pawnbroker.

"Oh, I see," said Mr. Tupman; "you are disposed to be facetious. But recollect, that if I consent to adopt this method of procuring money, we proceed to England to-morrow morning; and—"

A glance at Anastasie spoke the rest; for that look expressed as goodly a folio volume as ever issued from the publishing house of Messieurs Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper.

A blush on the part of Mademoiselle de Volage, and an imprecation against his eyes, coupled with an affirmative, on that of Mr. Adolphus Crashem, made known a reciprocal concurrence with the suggestion of the enamoured swain.

"But who is to go?" enquired Mr. Tracy Tupman.

"You," responded Mr. Adolphus Crashem.

"And how am I to find it?" demanded Mr. Tupman, alluding to the pawnbroker's shop.

"Leave that to me," exclaimed Mr. Crashem; and that gentleman glided hastily from the room. In a few minutes he returned with a small book in his hand. It was a "Guide to St. Omers," and happily afforded, through the *medium* of a lettered map, the information required. Mr. Crashem accordingly conducted his intimate and most particular friend to the door of the Mont-de-Piété * itself, and there left him to shift for himself.

Mr. Tupman, finding himself thus abandoned, rushed wildly into the shop, or rather office, and, hastening up to the compter, laid his watch upon the dirty board. A thin, sallow-faced man, with short grey hair standing bolt upright upon his head, and a pen behind his ear, proceeded to the immediate inspection of the handsome repeater, while its owner became the object of attention to half a dozen wretches that crowded near him. A young girl of fifteen, whose features had once worn the traces of beauty, but which were now disfigured with the unhealthy glow of dissipation and irregularity of life, abandoned the old shawl she had brought, to gaze upon the new-comer. A haggard-looking woman of about thirty, with a child in her arms, also suffered her eye to wander from the three francs her Sunday gown had procured for her sustenance and the nourishment of her half-famished babe; and three withered beldames, that resembled the witches in "Macbeth" rather than human beings, relinquished—the

* So the pawnbroking establishments, which are all government institutions, are denominated in France.

first her ear-rings, the second her ivory crucifix, and the third her son's only remaining shirt, for the purpose of taking a near view of the individual who possessed and was obliged to pledge so handsome an article as the gold repeater. But when the chief clerk in the office spread the sum of eight hundred francs, or 32*l.* sterling, on the table before Mr. Tupman, the sunken eye of the young girl recovered some of its lost fire; the miserable mother clasped her hands in agony together, as if the sight of so much money reminded her of better days, and made the present moment a thousand times more painful; and the three old hags peered closely at the glittering heap, as if each one were calculating whether such a sum would not suffice her for the remainder of her years. A decrepit and infirm old man, who had hitherto stood at a distance, now came forward and joined the groupe; and as his dimmed eye glanced towards the coin, he muttered somewhat concerning "*la loterie*," and appeared to curse his fate that he had no more substance left to consign to the same infernal vortex whither he had doubtless precipitated all the little treasure he had ever possessed. Mr. Tupman hastily gathered up the money that lay before him, put the duplicate into his pocket, gave a five-franc piece to the unhappy mother with the young child, took no notice of the other persons present, and retreated from the dismal scene as quickly as he possibly could tear himself from the spot. But that single phase amongst the thousands which human life presents, was long present to his memory.

On his return to the hotel, Mr. Tupman placed the money in the hands of Mr. Crashem, by whom the bill was forthwith paid, and another account commenced, nothing being farther from that gentleman's intention than the proposed departure for England. With a most laudable resolution, however, of doubling or trebling his capital according to circumstances, did he that night repair to the chief café in the town; and there he was speedily engaged in a game of *écarté* with the English who frequented that resort, and whose principal employment was the plunder of their unwary fellow-countrymen. A few of the *élite* English from Calais had moreover taken a trip to St. Omer's on the eventful day alluded to; and by them was Mr. Crashem as well treated as if he had fallen into the hands of a select party of bush-rangers in New South Wales. Indeed, it is almost to be wondered that they suffered him to return with his coat and boots to his hotel, at half-past three o'clock on the following morning.

When Mr. Tupman descended from his bed-chamber to the breakfast-room, he was somewhat dismayed by the lengthened faces worn by his beloved Anastasie and his sincere friend, Mr. Adolphus Crashem; and he already experienced no inconsiderable alarm relative to the projected trip to England.

"What is the matter, now?" enquired Mr. Tupman, almost afraid to speak.

"Oh! dem robbers!" sobbed Mademoiselle Anastasie, as if her heart were ready to break.

"Crashem, what *is* the matter?" demanded Mr. Tupman, in an authoritative tone that he reserved for occasions of urgency and need.

"My dear friend," said Mr. Crashem, in a mournful voice, "a terrible misfortune has befallen us. Last evening, King Leopold

passed through the town on his way to Belgium—you know he has just been on a visit to England—and curiosity prompted me to go down stairs, after I had bade you good night, to see his turn-out. He bought those lovely pie-balds of my friend, Lord Spurrumup—

"Well, well," interrupted Mr. Tupman, impatiently; "and the misfortune?"

"Ah! de misfortune," echoed Anastasie, sobbing louder than ever.

"I was looking at the king's equipage," continued Mr. Crashem, with difficulty suppressing a laugh, for Mr. Tupman's expressive countenance was contracted into the most hideous contortions; "and it was then that the purse—"

"What?" said Mr. Tupman, in a very faint tone of voice.

"Evaporated like smoke!" added Mr. Crashem.

"And the money?" enquired Mr. Tupman, anxiously

"With it," said Mr. Crashem, by way of reply.

Mr. Tupman sank upon a chair, and would have given way to the wildest expressions of his grief, had not the fair Anastasie hastened to console him.

"Never mind, old fellow!" cried Mr. Crashem; "I have been in many a worse storm than this, and have not failed to weather them every one. At six o'clock this morning was I up"—he had not been to bed at all—"and already have I concerted an excellent scheme by which we may realize three or four hundred francs, just to take us on to Dover, where I can get any money I like from the governor of the Castle, who is an intimate friend of mine. I once stayed with him for three months; and he was so fond of me, I never could get out of his sight."

Such indeed was the fact; for Mr. Crashem's creditors had certainly consigned him on a specific occasion to the custody and for the time now mentioned. Mr. Tupman's drooping spirits revived a little at the assurances of his friend, and he requested to be made acquainted with the excellent scheme already concocted for the purpose of raising supplies for immediate use.

"It's all cut and dried, my dear fellow," answered Mr. Crashem; "I have arranged every thing myself. The fact is, there's an English company of itinerant actors in this town—they are making a little tour in the north of France—and understanding that they couldn't very well get up a pantomime for want of skilful people, I have engaged myself as Harlequin, Mademoiselle as Columbine, and yourself as Pantaloon!"

"Nonsense!" cried Mr. Tracy Tupman, in mingled astonishment and indignation.

"Fact," said Mr. Crashem, with the most imperturbable coolness.

"But I never was a Pantaloon in all my life," ejaculated the late influential member of the Pickwick Club.

"Nothing more easy," rejoined Mr. Crashem. "I'll take care to tumble you about. Only follow the impulse of my humour, and you'll make an excellent Pantaloon. I gave my name as Thespis, and your's as Buskin; and very classic titles they are. But I see you think I'm joking," added Mr. Crashem, after a momentary pause, during which he surveyed, with ill-suppressed laughter, the ludicrously-miserable countenance and tragi-comic deportment of Mr. Tupman.

"I really do," said that gentleman, scarcely knowing whether to give vent to his irascibility or his mirth.

"Oh you do—do you?" cried Mr. Crashem; "well—I'll devilish soon convince you to the contrary; for here's the very prologue you, as Buskin, are to address to the audience—and it was given to me by Mr. Dowton, junior, for you to study by this evening."

And to the unspeakable dismay of Mr. Tupman, Mr. Adolphus Crashem manifested his sincerity by drawing a paper from his pocket, and reading the following words:—

PROLOGUE TO BE SPOKEN BY BUSKIN.

Ladies and gentlemen, I come
In *propriâ-personâ*—
Announc'd by trumpet and by drum,
With Thespis as my croney.
He as a Harlequin appears,
And I shall be full soon
Converted by the wand he rears
Into a Pantaloon.

As Columbine a lady gay
Upon the stage will caper,
And in the merry dance display
An ankle thin and taper.
The orchestra, to please your ears,
Shall play a merry tune,
While in his drollery appears
Your humble Pantaloon.

Boxes—return another night,
If well our wit you savour;—
Pit—should our frolics yield delight,
I beg the self-same favour.
Gall'ry—with orange-peels dispense,—
And come to see us soon:—
Where is th' amusement or the sense
To pelt the Pantaloon?

"Well," cried Mr. Crashem, in a tone of the most supreme delight, as he laid aside the paper on which this precious Prologue was written, —"and what do you think of that for a go of poetry?"

"Are there no other means of raising money?" enquired the wretched Mr. Tupman.

"None," said Mr. Crashem, striking the table with his clenched fist; "so let's breakfast, and then study our parts. All you've got to do is to learn a few antics. I suppose you can stand upon your head at a pinch?"

Had not the fair Anastasie interfered at this crisis, Mr. Tupman would certainly have adopted some desperate measure to rid himself of the Prologue and of Mr. Adolphus Crashem at one and the same time. But the winning smiles of Mademoiselle de Volage, and the prospect of acquiring a sufficiency of funds to carry them to Dover, where his happiness would be ensured for life, partially if not entirely reconciled Mr. Tupman to the enactment of the part of Pantaloon in

the evening's performance. Mr. Crashem manfully rejected all ideas of studying his portion of the Pantomime, and accordingly retired to a neighbouring café, where, to use his own expressive and truly original language, "he smoked cigars and played billiards all day with his equals," the chief society of the place being formed of the English actors, and the attendants upon the itinerant troop.

It was about six o'clock in the evening, that Mr. Tupman, having partaken of an excellent dinner, was summoned from the presence of his fair *inamorata* to don the sentimental garb of a Pantaloon in his own chamber, he having declined passing through that ordeal in the robing-room at the theatre. One of the subordinate actors was placed at his disposal; and Mr. Tupman forthwith underwent the ceremony of a theatrical *toilette*.

"But I am not to appear on the stage in the first instance as a Pantaloon?" said Mr. Tupman, surveying himself from top to toe in the looking-glass, and secretly admiring his deportment in the interesting garb.

"Oh! no, Sir," returned the actor; "but we shall be obliged to borrow a jacket from the prompter, a pair of trunk-breeches from the stage-manager, and a few other articles from some of my friends, for you to wear previous to your transformation by the Harlequin; so that you had better walk down to the theatre as you are."

"Very well," said Mr. Tupman, screwing his courage up to a most desperate pitch, and whispering the name of Anastasie at the same time; "I will just throw a cloak over my shoulders, and join you at the street-door."

The actor took the hint, and retired from the room, just as a post-chaise and four drove hastily into the court-yard of the hotel.

Mr. Tupman surveyed himself once more in the glass—breathed the name of Anastasie with holy fervour a second time—and having endorsed his mantle, which fell gracefully over his quaint attire, he emanated with due solemnity from the chamber, and slowly descended the stairs, pondering on the strange adventures which had befallen him during the last few days. Wrapt up in such important and deep contemplation, he did not perceive that he had nearly overturned a gentleman who was running hastily up the stair-case; but the shock recalled his scattered ideas, and, when he raised his head to apologize for his apparent rudeness, to his horror and astonishment he recognised the never-to-be-forgotten features and intelligent countenance of Mr. Pickwick.

"What! Pickwick—is that you?" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, almost sinking upon the stairs.

"Ah! Tupman!" cried our venerable old friend, starting with mingled surprise and pleasure. "But—God bless me! what does this mean?"—and Mr. Pickwick indicated the theatrical attire through the opening of the cloak in front.

"I—I—" stammered Mr. Tupman, unable to conceal his confusion.

"What is it, Sir?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, in an authoritative tone that showed he was determined not to be played with.

"I am going to act at the theatre to-night," said M. Tupman.

"To act!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick; "and, pray, Sir, what were *you* going to act? The part of Tom-fool, I suppose—eh, Sir?"

"No," replied Mr. Tupman, meekly; "I am to be the Pantaloon in this night's Pantomime."

Mr. Pickwick was thunder-struck at this intelligence, and for some moments he remained without the power of utterance. At length the presence of mind so seldom lost by that truly extraordinary man, returned; and in a low but impressive tone, he said, "Mr. Tupman, where is your private room?"

"Up stairs—on the second floor," returned that gentleman.

"Lead the way to it, then," said Mr. Pickwick; "I will follow you."

There was no necessity for Mr. Pickwick to repeat his command; Mr. Tupman did not exhibit the slightest inclination to disobey his great leader, but turned round, and ascended the stairs towards his bed-room with a beating heart and a countenance expressive of the most profound misery.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. PICKWICK AND MR. WINKLE ARE INFORMED OF MR. TUPMAN'S DEPARTURE.—MRS. WESTON'S SOIREE.—THE TRULY EDIFYING CONVERSATION, IN WHICH MR. PICKWICK ENGAGES WITH MR. SCUTTLE AND MR. SEPTIMUS CHITTY.—THE SUPPER, AND OTHER EQUALLY AMUSING INCIDENTS.—MR. WELLER'S ANECDOTE.

Ye, who listen with avidity to the anecdotes of life, and follow with ardour the varied paths of romance—who expect that the author will perform the wishes of your imagination, and that the deficiencies of one chapter will be supplied by another—attend to the adventures of Pickwick and of Winkle!

At five o'clock, on the day when Mr. Tupman deemed it prudent to leave Paris with Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, did Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle return to Meurice's hotel to dress for dinner. But when Mr. Weller announced the pleasing fact that the repast was served up, and the provoking one that Mr. Tupman was not yet returned, those two gentlemen did that which any other two gentlemen would have done in the same situation, viz. they sate down and dined without him.

"Very singular," said Mr. Pickwick, when the dessert was placed upon the table; "Tupman seldom dines out without letting us know beforehand. I hope no disagreeable occurrence has detained him."

"So do I," said Mr. Winkle, shrewdly suspecting that some love-affair was the cause of their friend's absence.

The wine was passed, and a miscellaneous conversation wiled away the time till the hour approached for preparing for Mrs. Weston's *soirée*. The antepenultimate glass was imbibed—and still Mr. Tupman did not make his appearance. The penultimate potation was drank in silence—and the ultimate was not capable of soothing the anxiety of Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle. The clock struck eight—another half-hour passed away—and then the door was hastily opened.

But it was not Mr. Tupman who entered the room, although a person little less illustrious—it was Mr. Weller.

"Letter, Sir," said that gentleman, handing a note to his master, and slowly retreating towards the door, through which he did not, however, think it worth while to evaporate.

Mr. Pickwick immediately recognised the hand-writing of Mr. Tupman, and as speedily made himself aware of the contents of the missive. He uttered not a syllable, but passed the note to his young friend, and sank thoughtfully back into his chair.

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle; "Tupman has actually deserted us—run away—bolted!"—and large tears ran down his cheeks.

"Vell," said Mr. Weller, after a moment's consideration, "here's the devil to pay, and no money to give him! If I vos the gov'ner, blest if I vouldn't drive them wagaries out o' Mr. Tupman's head; I'd rub him down vith a oaken towel, and give twenty-five drops o' shillalah-oil in his tea every mornin' for a fortnit or so."

"Perhaps he may come back in a day or two," suggested Mr. Pickwick.

"At all events, we mus'n't let our friends know that he has eloped," said Mr. Winkle. "Scuttle and Walker would only laugh at us."

"That 'ud be too civil by von half," remarked Mr. Weller, "vich vos the wery appropriate observation made on a certain oc-casion."

"What was that, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, endeavouring to force a smile.

"Vy, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, "vonce upon a time a poor vasher-voman vos a-valkin' along Pentonwil vith a huge basket o' linen on each arm, and a bundle o' the same on her back. Vell, Sir, she stops at a house—and a wery decent crib it where—and she sees a gen'leman a-coming along; so she asks him to knock at the door for her. The gen'leman, vich vos exceedin' obligin', immediately complied vith the poor voman's rek-vest; but instead o' comin' it small vith a single knock, as becomed the poor vasher-voman's con-dition, he gives a tat-tat-tat-tat—rat-tat-tat-tat—tat-tat-tat—tat—tat, increasing more wiolently vith every stroke. Vell indeed might the poor voman be b-foundered, and the passin' chimbley-sveep exclaim, 'Go it, my ey—that's too civil by half.'"

"Very singular," said Mr. Pickwick, rising from his chair. "Sam, get us some hot water—and let's make haste and start to Mrs. Weston's abode."

The two gentlemen soon beautified themselves to their hearts' content, and at about half-past nine o'clock they proceeded to a handsome house in the Rue Taitbout, a portion of which was occupied by Mrs. Weston; and were speedily ushered into the presence of Mr. Scuttle and his niece. Mrs. Weston was at this period exactly what Madame Vestris was about the same time—viz, fat, fair, and forty; her figure was more in the proportions of a Hebe than of a Sylph—her countenance was, however, pleasing—her eyes dark blue and languishing—her teeth peculiarly white—and her bust remarkably well formed. She received Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle with a sweet smile, and expressed the pleasure she experienced in becoming acquainted with two such eminently distinguished gentlemen.

"I'm very glad you're come," said Mr. Scuttle to Mr. Pickwick, "but where is your friend Tupman?"

"Obliged to go out of town on very pressing business, my dear Sir," returned Mr. Pickwick, somewhat hastily. "I most sincerely regret—"

"Oh! it is a mutual loss," interrupted Mr. Scuttle; "I should have been happy to have introduced him to my amiable niece—and he would have lost nothing by her acquaintance."

"Uncle Jerry—uncle Jerry—" exclaimed Mrs. Weston, playfully tapping Mr. Scuttle's arm with her fan.

"Well, well, my dear," said Mr. Scuttle, laughing; "I must leave these gentlemen to find out your good qualities by themselves, I suppose. But, what do you think I did the other day?" continued Mr. Scuttle, addressing himself to Mr. Pickwick.

"I really don't know," said Mr. Pickwick; "but I hope you will tell me."

"Why," rejoined Mr. Scuttle, "I was smoking my meerschum down stairs in a back parlour, and my niece was seated at the table reading to me, when, in a moment of absence, I took up her fore-finger and used it instead of the tobacco-stopper."

"Indeed," said Mr. Pickwick. "That was an oversight not easily forgiven."

"Oh! I assure you, Mr. Pickwick," exclaimed the amiable widow, "that *that* is nothing to some of uncle Jerry's inadvertencies. About a month ago, I sent him to my shoe-maker to order up some satin slippers—and—but, I never can tell the result;" and Mrs. Weston hid her face with her fan, and tittered behind it in a manner at once interesting and agreeable to a degree.

"Oh! nonsense, my dear," added Mr. Scuttle. "I merely sent up half-a-dozen pairs of top-boots instead of the satin shoes; that was not so very bad, was it, Mr. Pickwick?"

The gentleman thus appealed to, responded with a smile, and Mrs. Weston retreated to another part of the room to receive a stout lady and her train of seven marriageable daughters who arrived at the moment.

"Charming woman—eh, Mr. Pickwick?" said Mr. Scuttle, alluding to his niece.

"Mrs. Weston appears to be a very amiable lady," was the courteous answer.

"You shall hear her sing presently, Mr. Pickwick," continued the fond uncle. "What do you think? Knowing that you are partial to French airs, she has translated one of Berenger's songs, and intends to favour us with it this very evening."

"That is exceedingly kind," observed Mr. Pickwick, glancing round the spacious and handsomely-furnished room, and perceiving that there were about fifty or sixty ladies and gentlemen present, some of whom he recognised to be French and others English, through the *medium* of the various criterions specified by Mr. Scuttle at the ambassador's ball.

There was a little old gentleman with a red good-humoured face, and with three or four orders carelessly attached to the breast of his coat,

as if they had grown to the very places where they had been thrown, who skipped about from one lady to another, who had a compliment to address to each, and who was universally received with smiles and expressions of delight. Had it been a public assembly-room, Mr. Pickwick would have at once concluded that he was the master of the ceremonies; but as it was a private party, he enquired of Mr. Scuttle the name of the good-natured little old gentleman in question.

"What! don't you know Sir Sydney S——h?" demanded Mr. Scuttle. "I will take the opportunity of introducing you to him when he passes this way. But I see that my niece has seated herself at the piano, and that we are about to have one of her favourite and admired airs. There—do you hear that symphony, Mr. Pickwick? It is the prelude to the very one to which I alluded just now."

Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle assumed the most graceful attitude of attention possible; and Mr. Scuttle beat time with his right foot. Sir Sydney S——h resumed his seat next to a young French lady to whom he had already related one or two of his most amusing anecdotes; and Mrs. Weston, with a taste that would not have shamed many of the most admired songsters of the age, sang the following translation of one of de Berenger's most popular and affecting songs, accompanied by some of the sweetest sounds that ever emanated from the piano-forte.

THE VETERAN CORPORAL.*

Forward, brave comrades, in full many a fight,
Your muskets charg'd—those arms prepar'd to kill;
The tears you shed around me yester-night,
I almost feel upon my forehead still.
When peace incentive urg'd me to retire
From busy scenes of tumult and of war,
Fool that I was to fancy that the fire
Of glory still might be my leading star!
Slow be thy solemn pace—
Nor weep thy comrade's doom;
For short is now the space
Between him and the tomb!

Struck by a stripling, deck'd with misus'd power,
My sword alone could vindicate the blow:
Such was the crime that thus advanc'd the hour,
When as meet penalty my blood must flow!
At Austerlitz and Arcole have I bled—
'Twas mine the snows of Muscovy to brave;
And now an angry moment that has fled,
With stern decree, condemns me to the grave!
Slow be thy, &c., &c., &c.

Soldiers! would ye against the cross I wear
Exchange a limb?—Yet, in the bloody fray,
When monarchs fled before our armies—there
I won that cross which is your mark to-day.

* The subject of this air is the Veteran Corporal's address to his comrades, as they lead him forth to the place of military execution.

Full oft at eve the hist'ry of each fight
Has chang'd the hours to minutes, as we sate
Around the board on which the wine was bright:—
Alas! that glory's stamp'd my present fate!
Slow be thy, &c., &c., &c.

And there is one among ye who knows well
My native village. Thither let him hie,
Henceforth in blest tranquillity to dwell,
Nor seek those paths that haste the hour to die.
In early youth, amidst my father's lands,
Devoid of care, 'twas mine to rove at will,
Or pluck th' inviting fruits with eager hands:—
Alas! a tender mother loves me still!
Slow be thy, &c., &c., &c.

Whose mourning voice my fate seems to deplore?
It is the widow of my comrade slain!
From Russian snows her infant child I bore,
Tended it night and day, and soothed *her* pain.
Else had they perish'd in that cheerless land—
For none was found to succour them but I;—
And now, with suppliant voice and uprais'd hand,
She prays to heav'n to bless me ere I die
Slow be thy, &c., &c., &c.

Let not th' accursed bandage stop my view:
The warrior may not shrink—though face to face
He find himself with Death!—My friends, adieu—
We enter now upon the destin'd place!
Mark well your aim—be sure to let your eye
Rest on the glittering cross in battle won.
Once more, adieu—and may the Lord on high
To ev'ry mother safe restore her son!
Slow be thy solemn pace—
Nor weep thy comrade's doom;
For short is now the space
Between him and the tomb!

"There," said Mr. Scuttle, who had been standing with his left foot on Mr. Pickwick's toes for the last quarter of an hour—"that is in honour of you, my dear Sir. I have already desired my niece to make a fair copy of the song. Are you a musician yourself?"

"I am very fond of music," replied Mr. Pickwick," and am considerably indebted to Mrs. Weston for her kindness. But there is a gentleman with whom I am slightly acquainted, I think;"—and Mr. Pickwick indicated the person of Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"Indeed," said Mr. Scuttle: "he is a very amusing man. I will go and bring him to you at once."

Mr. Scuttle accordingly walked slowly across the room, exchanged a word or two with the various guests whom he encountered, and stepping up to his niece's fat poodle which lay sleeping on an ottoman, he seized the unfortunate animal by the neck and tail, and returning to the place where Mr. Pickwick was standing, deposited the dog in that gentleman's arms. It was a truly interesting and beautiful sight to witness the philanthropic ardour with which Mr. Pickwick

endeavoured to soothe the rage and hush the cries of the awakened poodle, while Mr. Winkle retreated to a distant corner of the room, having read a case of hydrophobia, even in winter-time, that very morning.

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Scuttle, now for the first time perceiving the error of which he had been guilty, while Mrs. Weston, with an amiable and praiseworthy solicitude, hastened to rescue her favourite from the somewhat awkward and unpleasant gripe in which Mr. Pickwick retained it:—"I beg you a thousand pardons—but I am really so absent! However, here is Mr. Chitty himself."

"Poor dear little thing!" cried Mrs. Weston, fondly caressing her dog. The amiable lady had sent a female servant out of her house to the nearest hospital, only a few days before, because the unfortunate girl had happened to fall down stairs and dislocate her ankle; but the slightest inconvenience to which the poodle might be put, was very naturally calculated to awaken her tenderest sympathies.

"Ah! my dear Sir," exclaimed Mr. Septimus Chitty, grasping Mr. Pickwick's out-stretched hand; "and how are you? I intended to have done myself the pleasure to *voco*—call—upon you to-morrow, and read the first act of my Drama; but I was afraid lest you might think me an *aper*—a bore."

"I should have much pleasure," said Mr. Pickwick, endeavouring to ratify his assertion by the expression of his countenance.

"You are very kind," observed Mr. Septimus Chitty, putting his hand to the pocket where he usually kept his manuscripts, and then suddenly recollecting that he had left them at home. "Well, that is a pity—*misericordia*—I declare! I have forgotten to put *The Creation* in my pocket."

"It *is* a pity," said Mr. Pickwick, looking very much as if he thought so.

"It is," repeated Mr. Chitty: "I might have taken you into a snug corner, and read you a *parvam pacem*—little piece—with such ease! But, perhaps you will do me the favour of calling upon me. Here is my card."

Mr. Septimus Chitty handed a parallelogram of paste-board to Mr. Pickwick, who acknowledged his gratitude with a bow, and hastened to peruse—for a perusal it indeed was—the superscription, which ran as follows:—

> **Mr. Septimus Chitty,**
>
> Author of several scientific works, Professor of Latin and *les Belles Lettres*, Member of various institutions, Correspondent to many of the London Journals, Poet to the British Embassy, &c., &c., &c., &c., &c.
>
> 14, *Boulevard Mont Parnasse.*

"We shall see each other again, presently," said Mr. Chitty, when Mr. Pickwick had consigned the card to his pocket; and with a

patronising nod, evidently studied on the very summit of Mount Helicon or on the Boulevard Parnassus, Mr. Chitty left Mr. Pickwick and mingled with a groupe of English gentlemen in another part of the room.

"Extraordinary man, that, Mr. Pickwick," said Mr. Scuttle, who had been occupied during the last five minutes in consoling his niece and the poodle; "a striking example of neglected talent, eh?"

"The idea of the four winds is certainly very ingenious," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"He has read the *Creation* to you, then?" said Mr. Scuttle with a sly laugh.

"A portion of it—but I really forget how much."

"What! can Mr. Pickwick forget any thing?" exclaimed the absent gentleman. "I fancied that a memory like your's was infallible. But at all events, you will never do what I did last night, I hope?"

"Pray, what was that?" enquired Mr. Winkle, now relieved from his fears relative to the poodle.

"Why," rejoined Mr. Scuttle, "when I retired to my chamber last night at about the usual hour, I put my clothes into the bed, and hung myself over the chair."

The laugh, with which this avowal was received, had scarcely subsided into a smile on the beaming countenance of Mr. Pickwick and the radiant features of Mr. Winkle, when the music and cards, which had formed the principal entertainment of the evening, were suddenly eschewed for the still more substantial enjoyment of supper. To Mr. Pickwick's astonishment, when the company arrived in the banquetting-room, the ladies seated themselves at the table on which a variety of the choicest luxuries was spread, and the gentlemen stationed themselves behind their chairs to enact the parts of waiters, although there was no lack of more befitting attendants.

A tall French officer undertook to carve the turkey stuffed with truffles, for the lady of the house—a German Count, whose five names embraced every letter in the alphabet by the aid of a little transposition, assisted a dowager baroness to by no means a small portion of a *vol-au-vent*—the stout lady and her slender train of seven daughters were provided each with the dainties she loved best by an obsequious gallant—and in the confused hum of voices, about a dozen different languages might be recognised around the table, the effect of which was very harmonious and pleasing to the ear. Mr. Pickwick could not help noticing that the English ladies ate a great deal more than they talked, and that the French talked a great deal more than they ate. The English gentlemen seized every opportunity of tossing off a glass of wine, and the French awaited patiently the moment when the time should arrive for the male portion of the company to partake of the supper.

Mr. Winkle had unhappily undertaken to wait upon a Scotch lady with a young daughter of about ten or eleven; and the trouble she gave him was as inconceivable as it was fatiguing. Mr. Winkle fancied his toils would never end; for the young daughter had apparently made up her mind to taste every dish on the table; and Mr. Winkle was every moment adjured, "as a good soul," to procure "a

tiny morsel" of this fowl—and that pigeon—and those preserves—and the tart at the farther end of the table—and the pine-apple opposite the lady in the pink gown—and the oranges between the Italian Countess and the German Baroness. To run after twelve dishes became a second edition, considerably revised and improved, of the twelve labours of Hercules.

Mr. Pickwick was shortly summoned, through the *medium* of an intimation on the part of Mr. Scuttle, to attach himself as the favoured satellite to the sphere occupied by Mrs. Weston; and as that lady was more intent upon providing for the comforts of her guests, than for her own, Mr. Pickwick's office was not a very arduous one. Indeed, he has since declared that it was not without its charms.

Mr. Scuttle himself, in a moment of the most praiseworthy gallantry, entered upon the undisputed task of ministering to an aged lady whose auricular powers were none of the clearest; and it is but due to her extreme patience and good-humour to mention, that when Mr. Scuttle, in a momentary fit of absence, laid the whole of a cold partridge upon her plate instead of helping her to the wing of a fowl which she had requested, not a murmur of disapprobation escaped her lips. Nor less did the excellent and kind-hearted old lady dispose of the nine glasses of Madeira which her cavalier, in the same strain of mental aberration, poured out for her.

At length the ladies rose from the table, and retired to the music-room; and then the gentlemen occupied the seats thus desirably relinquished to them. Mr. Scuttle ordered in a fresh supply of wine; and to judge by the manner in which the German Count, Mr. Septimus Chitty, and a few others commenced their attack upon the viands, one would have thought that the supper was the town of Antwerp, and the guests the French soldiers conducting the siege.

The clock had already struck one, when Mr. Pickwick thought of retiring. He intimated his intention to Mr. Winkle and Mr. Septimus Chitty, the latter gentleman having kept near our two illustrious heroes since supper-time; and they all three accordingly hastened to take leave of their kind host and hostess. Mrs. Weston bowed politely to Mr. Winkle and the poet; but she extended her hand to Mr. Pickwick, and it struck that gentleman that a slight pressure of the fingers on the part of the widow expressed her satisfaction at having formed his acquaintance. He therefore bestowed upon her one of his most benevolent smiles, and when he had gone through the same ceremony with Mr. Scuttle, withdrew from the apartment, followed by Mr. Winkle and Mr. Chitty.

The night—or rather the morning—was fine; and as the three gentlemen were possessed of as many great-coats, they did not think it worth while to hire a hackney-coach. As they passed up the Rue Taitbout, Mr. Pickwick's attention was attracted by a phenomenon for an explanation of which he was obliged to refer to the votary of the Muses. On the fifth story of a house which they passed as they proceeded towards the Boulevards, a man was hanging half-way out of a window, playing the violin as if he were insane, and bawling at the very top of his voice the figures of a dance—"*Chaine Anglaise*"—"*en avant deux*"—"*queue du chat*," &c., &c.; and, after each vociferation, he played away more furiously than ever.

"Surely that cannot be a mad-house," cried Mr. Pickwick, with a species of shudder.

"Oh! no," exclaimed Mr. Chitty; "that is a dancing-master—*saltans magister*."

"But do people learn dancing at this time of night?" enquired the bewildered Mr. Pickwick, beginning to think that Paris was a strange city.

"There is a little humbug in that, my dear Sir," explained Mr. Chitty in a whisper, although there was no danger of being overheard. "That gentleman has doubtless had a ball this evening; and as his candles are supplied by contract as well as the room, he plays at the window for an hour or so after his pupils have left him, in order to attract the notice of passengers in the street. *Nunc sub statis*—now you understand."

"Then the room is actually empty at this moment?" cried Mr. Winkle.

"Exactly so," said Mr. Chitty; "but very few people know that. Hark! how he calls!"

It was not, however, very necessary to hold one's breath to listen; indeed, if there were a New Police in Paris, the dancing-master would soon have found his way to the station-house under a charge of alarming an entire neighbourhood. But no such impediments exist in the sovereign city, to the liberty of the French citizen; so the dancing-master continued to bawl out, "*La Pastorelle*," &c., until half-past two o'clock, without interruption.

Mr. Pickwick and his companions had not proceeded far down the Boulevards towards the Rue de la Paix, when their attention was again called into operation by a gentleman who lay stretched at full length upon the pavement.

"You had better take care," said Mr. Winkle, his blood running cold in his veins, "or they'll swear we murdered the man."

"No fear of that," observed the philanthropic Mr. Pickwick, who had stooped down, and examined the features of the prostrate individual by the light of the adjacent lamp. "He is alive—and—and, I think—if I mistake not—"

"*Animus oculum*—mind your eye, in case he should jump up suddenly," suggested the prudent Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"It ain't—a—a part of—of—my system!" murmured the prostrate gentleman. "I told 'em I'd go—back; but—but I'm d——d—if—if I do!"

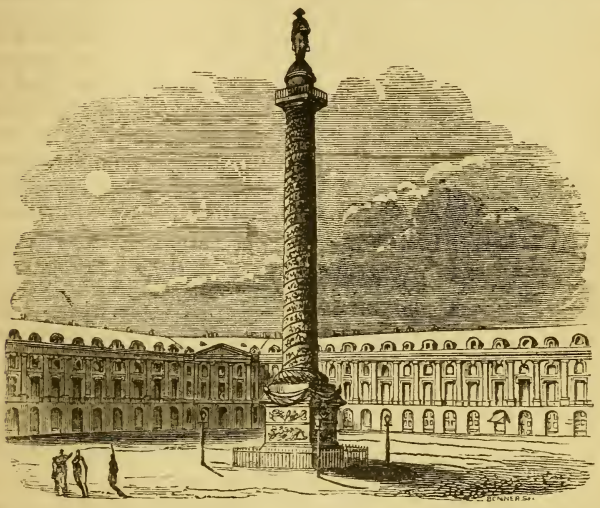
"Mr. Hook Walker, I declare!" ejaculated Mr. Winkle.

"*Hamus Ambulator*—who is he?" demanded Mr. Chitty.

"A friend—that is, an acquaintance of our's," answered Mr. Winkle.

At this moment a patrol of municipal guards passed by, and considerately undertook to carry Mr. Walker to his own home, on a shutter which they proposed to borrow for the purpose, providing any letter in that gentleman's pocket should indicate his address; and if no such intimation were discovered, they declared their intention of stowing him safely away in the guard-house. Mr. Pickwick accordingly abandoned the systematic individual to the patrol, and hastened homewards with his companions. Mr. Septimus Chitty bade him and

Mr. Winkle adieu at the commencement of the Rue de la Paix, and continued his walk along the Boulevards, while the other two gentlemen proceeded to the Hotel Meurice, through the Place Vendome. The moon rode high in the heavens, and her silvery light shone chastely upon the tall column on the summit of which stands the statue of the greatest warrior that ever lived. The column itself is one of the most



remarkable edifices in Paris. Its height is a hundred and sixty feet, and its diameter fifteen. It is in imitation of the pillar of Trajan at Rome, and is built of stone covered with bas-reliefs in bronze, composed of thirteen hundred pieces of cannon taken from the armies of Russia and Austria. The sentry paced backwards and forwards, at the base of that stupendous monument thus formed of the ordnance wrested from the powers of Europe by the Eagle of France; and the soldier by his very mien seemed to feel as if Napoleon were looking down upon him from the dizzy eminence above. Mr. Pickwick could not help lingering for one moment to survey the uniform ranges of buildings which circumvent the arena in which the column stands; and it was only when he saw the tri-coloured banner fluttering over the lofty portico of the Chancery—that splendid abode allotted to the Minister of Justice—that he felt the searching cold air of the morning already imparting a shivering sensation to his limbs. He accordingly hastened onwards at a quicker pace; and to the infinite delight of Mr. Winkle, the two gentlemen arrived in about five minutes at the gate of Meurice's Hotel

It may be readily supposed that, when Mr. Weller made his appearance in Mr. Pickwick's room on the ensuing morning with a smiling countenance and a jug of hot-water, his master's first question was relative to Mr. Tupman instead of the usual topic—the weather.

"Any news of Mr. Tupman, Sam?" enquired the great man.

"Don't you vish you may get it, Sir?" replied the faithful valet.

Mr. Pickwick declared that he did, and reiterated his question.

"No, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, kindly condescending to favour his master with a direct answer; "there ain't no news of him as yet, and there ain't wery likely to be any, I should rayther think."

"Why so, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Cos, Sir, he's thvarted in love—he's crossed, as the sayin' is—an' I shouldn't be at all sup-prised if he didn't go and shut his-self up in some old hermitage, or turn monk vith a shaved crown, or do some other desperate deed to make a hero of his-self. But, if I vonce caught him, as the shark said ven he saw the nigger a-svimmin' at a distance—vouldn't I hold him? Oh!—no—I'd just let him loose as the banker did the gen'leman of the svell mob in London."

"What was that, Sam?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"A wery tidy little annygoat, Sir," was the response.

"You may tell it me while I dress," said Mr. Pickwick, gliding on to the floor, as Mr. Weller did into a chair.

"Vell, Sir," began the domestic, "you must know that this annygoat vich I'm about to relate, vos told to me by the German courier as speaks all langvidges: so there's authority, chapter and verse, as the parson says. There's a banker at Calais o' the name o' Sorely, vich made all his money by straight-for'ard dealin' in the war-time; an' a wery rum chap he is in every partickler sense o' that wery expressive vord. Von day a gen'leman goes to him, and says, 'Sorely—my knowin' von—you must do a small discount for me this blessed mornin'. Here's a hexcellent bit o' stiff on London'—"

"A what?" interrupted Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! on'y a bill, Sir," explained Mr. Weller.

"Ah! I see," said Mr. Pickwick. "Go on, Sam."

"'Is there?' says the banker—" continued Mr. Weller—"vith a knowin' shrug o' his shoulder; 'let's have a look at it.'—The gen'leman accordingly pro-duces a wery fine piece o' paper, all cover'd over vith black and red vords and figgers—red figgers, Sir, is excellent things on a bill—they make it look business-like—"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, considerably edified.

"Oh! yes, Sir—an' so it vos appayrently in this here case; for the banker took the bill, an' give the gen'leman fifteen hundred francs, or sixty pounds, vich vos the walley o' the same. So the gen'leman pockets the coin, and makes his-self so wery particklerly scarce, that ven the bill come back pertested, Mr. Sorely couldn't lay hands on him not by no means. In fact, payment didn't seem to form any part o' that gen'leman's monetary calkilations. So Mr. Sorely makes enquiries, and finds that my lord vos off for London the same day as he discounted his bill. To London Mr. Sorely follers him, and finds him a-eatin' muffins and drinkin' chocolate in a hot-tel at the Vest End.—'Ah! good mornin', Sorely, my dear feller,' says the gen'leman, wery coolly.—'Good mornin', Sir,' returns t'other: 'an' about that bill o' your'n?'—'Oh! I'll pay it directly—on'y heerd on it yesterday too late for post—mistake at my banker's, that's all.'—Mr. Sorely's countenance cleared up, an' he thought his customer worn't a rogue arter all. So they calls a hackney-coach, an' avay they goes to a banker's in the city, the gen'leman askin' vether he'll have it in gold or notes, an' old Sorely ansverin' 'In either!'—they stops at the door o' the bank—the gen'leman jumps out, tellin' Sorely to vait a

minit, and valks boldly into the bank. But there he stays so precious a long time, that Sorely gets uneasy—goes to ask about his friend—and finds that he vent slap through the bank, arter having made some ridicklous enquiry o' the first clerk he sees, and disappeared by a door vich led into a back street. Sorely rushes back in desperation to the hackney-coach, and orders the jarvey to drive to the hot-tel at the Vest End. As they goes along the Strand, Mr. Sorely tvigs his customer a-valkin' as coolly as if nothin' had happened: so, in order to lose no time, he opens the coach door his-self, jumps out—chiveys the svell covey, who soon seed him, up the Strand; an' avay they vent like good uns, as the Newgate chaplin said ven the prisoners vent forth to be hanged. It where a prime spree, Sir—I warrant ye: but just as Mr. Sorely, whose face vos red and hissin', had catched the chap by the scruff o' the neck, another chap catches hold of *him*, a cryin' wery loud in his ear, 'You thundrin' thief! this here's your conspiraycy, is it? to bilk a poor feller like me, as has got a vife and thirteen small childern, out o' his fare. Blessed if I didn't suspect you vos a riglar *do* ven I tvigged your precious face at fust.'—This vos the hackney-coachman; and so sudden vos his attack upon the unfortnit Mr. Sorely, that the t'other gen'leman made his escape, and vos never seen arterwards by no von."

"Very extraordinary," said Mr. Pickwick, when his valet had brought this interesting tale to a conclusion. "But, do you know, that I am very uneasy about Tupman? I am afraid he has again fallen into the hands of unprincipled characters."

Mr. Weller appeared to reflect for a moment: then, suddenly relapsing into smiles, he exclaimed, "There's von man, Sir, as 'ud do your affair, an' discover vere Mr. Tupman is, even if he vosn't in this vorld at all."

"Who is he, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, hastily.

"Johnny-Darmy, Sir," was the abrupt answer.

Mr. Pickwick instantly seated himself at his writing-desk, and penned a brief note to M. Dumont, which Mr. Weller in due time conveyed to the twopenny post.

But the arrival of this gentleman was anxiously and vainly waited for on that and the three following days. On the fourth he, however, made his appearance, and accounted for the delay by informing his friends that he had been absent from Paris on particular business connected with his vocation. Mr. Pickwick then stated the dilemma in which he was placed with regard to his friend Mr. Tracy Tupman, and was not a little rejoiced when the good-natured Gendarme assured him that in less than three hours the place of Mr. Tupman's destination should be duly discovered.

Thrice did the long hand of Mr. Pickwick's watch perform its revolution round the dial—thrice did the adjacent clocks proclaim the lapse of another hour—and thrice did the great man console himself with the reflection that he would soon be close upon the traces of his absconded friend. At length, true to his promise, M. Dumont returned, and presented himself to Mr. Pickwick with a smile of satisfaction upon his countenance.

"Well, my good fellow, what news?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, hastily.

"I have succeeded," replied M. Dumont, throwing himself upon a chair, and his hat upon the table.

"And where is he?" cried Mr. Pickwick, almost breathless with agitation and curiosity.

"His passport is signed for Saint Omers," said Dumont. "I have been to the *Prefecture de Police* to ascertain the fact."

Mr. Pickwick rang the bell violently, and Mr. Weller immediately answered the summons.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, "tell Mr. Cailliez to get me a post-chaise and four immediately. I must be at Saint Omer's to-morrow evening by this time."

"Know how far you're a-goin'?" enquired Mr. Weller, looking as much inclined to move off in the required haste as the Monument to take a walk across the Thames.

"No," replied Mr. Pickwick. "But were it as far as Jerusalem, I must be there in four-and-twenty hours at the outside," added he great man with that peculiar felicity of idea which so eminently distinguished him.

"Must, eh?" observed Mr. Weller, very quietly. "Who's goin' too?"

"You, Sam," replied Mr. Pickwick: "Mr. Winkle will stay behind at Paris."

"Vell, that's a blessin'," cried Mr. Weller. "But how far air we off, as the gen'leman in the fire-balloon said to his-self?"

"About a hundred and fifty miles," elucidated M. Dumont.

"An' vot's the use o' goin' about the country, and makin' vild beastesses on ourselves?" remonstrated Mr. Weller, placing his arms a-kimbo, and confronting his master with as much respect as might be expected from a Cherokee Indian, were he brought to give evidence at the bar of the House of Commons. "You're past the age for galliwantin', you air, Sir, as the gen'leman said to Mathusalem."

"You mean Methuselah, Sam," suggested Mr. Pickwick.

"Vell, Sir, p'rhaps I do," cried Mr. Weller, dogmatically: "there ain't no sayin' that I don't, vich vos the observation made by the young chap to his tailor as told him he owed a bill: but, jokin' apart —ain't this a rum start o' your'n all o' a sudden, Sir?"

Mr. Pickwick declared that whether it were rum or not, he certainly intended a start, and requested his servant not to oppose his determinations, to which that gentleman responded by a dozen emphatic shakes of the head.

"Quite decided, Sir?" demanded Mr. Weller, after a pause, during which he brought to a conclusion the exercise he so considerately allowed his head.

"Quite," said Mr. Pickwick.

"An' no mistake, as the sheriff's officer says?"

An intimation was given that there was none.

"Vell, then, here goes," cried Mr. Weller, in a state of desperation.

"Pray be quick, Sam," urged the impatient Mr. Pickwick.

Mr. Weller accordingly hastened to obey his master's orders, and M. Dumont undertook to get the immortal gentleman's passport duly signed for him, in order to prevent as much delay as possible.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE HUNDRED DAYS OF THE PICKWICK ÆRA.—THE SUPPER-PARTY.—MESSIEURS PEACOCK AND BRANDENBERGH.—THE REPAST IN THE ENGLISH FASHION.—SOMETHING IS LEFT FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER.

It is a remarkable fact, that neither the private note-book of Mr. Pickwick, or of Mr. Tupman, furnishes us with any particulars relative to the immediate consequences of the latter gentleman's extraordinary trip to Saint Omer's. It is not less worthy of consideration, that a little more than three months was suffered to pass away without the slightest benefit to the said memoranda-books. The faithful historian, as well as the public, is therefore left in the dark relative to the transactions that occupied those Hundred Days, which form the most memorable epoch in this history, on account of the impervious gloom that envelopes them, and which consequently vie in importance with the similar period of time so justly celebrated in French history.

About the middle of March, 1835, a gentleman, clad in a suit of dark blue, with red cuffs and collar, an oil-skin hat surmounted by a tri-coloured cockade, and a large leathern box hanging by means of straps of the same from his neck, walked, as indeed he did every morning at the same hour, hastily down the Rue Royale Saint Honoré, and turned into the court-yard of a magnificent house over the gate-way of which was painted in large letters the number "18." The gentleman in blue stopped at the porter's lodge, opened the leathern box aforesaid, and thence extracted a letter, for which the porter immediately paid the price demanded. The gentleman in blue—or, in other words, the general-postman—then impelled himself once more into a species of rail-road walking speed, and instantaneously disappeared from the range of the porter's visual organs.

In the space of five or ten minutes, another gentleman, habited in a gay suit of livery, and with a face so good-humoured, that he looked for all the world like a peripatetic jest-book, emerged from the entrance to a stair-case at the bottom of the yard, and sauntered leisurely up to the porter's lodge to enquire by signs rather than words if there were any letters for his master. The newly-arrived epistle was forthwith produced, and Mr. Samued Weller, whom the reader has doubtless already recognised, glanced carelessly over the address, and retraced his steps to the suite of apartments occupied by his master and that gentleman's friends, on the third storey, observing to himself as he went along, "Vell, I s'pose that this here is another eighteen sous' vorth o' poetry from Mr. Snodgrass. Wery fertile in inwentions them poets air, to be sure; and many admirayble schemes is projected now-a-days, as the minister said ven the gen'leman proposed to make ship-biskits out o'Canada timber."

Mr. Weller rang at the bell of the suite of apartments before mentioned, and a ruddy-looking French girl opened the door. Sam bestowed a patronising smile upon this specimen of the beauties of Auvergne or Burgundy, and proceeded to the dining-room, where Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle were seated at the breakfast table.

"What! another letter—and from Snodgrass too!" said Mr. Pickwick, receiving the epistle from the hands of his valet. "Really that young man has an astonishing head," added Mr. Pickwick, gravely shaking his own.

"Is it in poetry again?" enquired Mr. Winkle, with evident signs of satiety of that article, which he wisely deemed to be more ornamental than useful.

"No—it is not," continued the great man, carefully unfolding the letter.

"Vell, that's a blessin'," said Mr. Weller, deliberately.

"You may retire, Sam," suggested Mr. Pickwick mildly; and, when the door had closed behind the retreating domestic, the contents of the letter were read as follows:—

"*March* 12.

"Dear Pickwick,

"I write to inform you that a most dreadful murder has been committed at Putney, on the person of Signora Sqorlini, an Italian singer, and that Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill are using tremendous exertions to discover the assassins. If it were not for the expense of postage, I should send you a sweet little poem of three hundred and fifty lines in running measure, which I wrote upon the occasion.

"I am delighted to hear that you and our friends have got into comfortable lodgings; as the hotel bills must have been ruinous in the extreme. Inspector Higgs and Police Smill have just passed by our house in a tax-cart at full gallop, as it appears that two countrymen were drinking last night at a tavern in the neighbourhood, and displayed several half-crowns when they paid their bill. The whole affair has caused a tremendous sensation, especially amongst the itinerant ballad-singers; one of whom, by the bye, is bawling underneath my window at this very moment. A weekly paper, that would most likely have fallen last Sunday, has made its fortune by this providential circumstance; the shareholders, I understand, are elated at the news of the murder to an extraordinary degree.

"Mr. Smuggles, the spirited landlord of the tavern at which Signora Sqorlini was murdered, is showing her body to the public at sixpence a-head. Three hours have elapsed since I commenced this letter, and Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill are still using tremendous exertions. This afternoon Mr. Smuggles had an interview with Mr. Peddlesworth the magistrate, but the result is not known. As the weekly paper, before alluded to, advertises 'The fullest, most correct, and most important account' of the murder, together with an engraving of the same, to be given away 'gratis' with the journal itself, I shall take care and forward you a number.

"*March* 13, 10 *A. M.*

"Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill overtook the countrymen who were going into the country to work for a farmer by whom they were particularly engaged. This morning they were brought up before Mr. Peddlesworth, when Mr. Smuggles was also in attendance. It however turned out that the poor fellows were two honest men, and that they have lost their places by this delay. Mr. Peddlesworth told

them 'to mind and not be had up before him again on suspicion, or they'd know the reason why,' and dismissed them with a severe reprimand. Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill are now gone on another track, and are using every exertion to detect the assassin. It appears that immediately after the liberation of the two countrymen, information was received at the police-office concerning an individual whose appearance seemed to justify the suspicions that were entertained with regard to him. He carried a thick stick, evidently for bad purposes—was wild and incoherent in his manners—refused to utter a single syllable which any body might understand—and had drank three pots of half-and-half, besides two sixpenny glasses of grog, at a public-house in the vicinity of the police-office. No doubt, therefore, remains as to his identity with the heartless assassin; and it is confidently hoped that Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill will capture him before night.

"4 *P. M.*

"The individual above alluded to, has been taken, and has undergone a very severe examination before Mr. Peddlesworth. The office was crowded to excess. Mr. Smuggles, whose conduct has been highly praiseworthy since the discovery of the horrid crime, was again in attendance. I understand he is a short, well-looking man, and wears a blue coat and tops and cords. It is said he has cleared eighty pounds by exhibiting the body. He put five pounds into the parish poor-box this very morning.

"The prisoner, who had been discovered drinking in an obscure tavern, was so overcome by his feelings or the liquor he had drank, that it was found impossible to elicit any thing from him. The worthy magistrate accordingly remanded him, observing 'that he had no doubt as to the prisoner's guilt, for a more atrocious-looking scoundrel was never brought before him during the twenty years he had sate on that bench.' The crowd was loud in its applauses of the successful exertions of Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill.

"*March* 14, 3 *P. M.*

"This morning the prisoner was again brought up for further examination. Mr. Smuggles and several other publicans were present. It however appears that the accused was an honest rat-catcher, and that his extraordinary behaviour yesterday was to be attributed only to the effects of his potations. Mr. Peddlesworth accordingly fined him five shillings, ordered him to pay the office-fees, and find bail for his future good conduct. A master chimney-sweeper and a tripe-man, who were in attendance, entered into the required recognizances, and the prisoner was ordered to be discharged. I shall now despatch this letter, and acquaint you with the result of the affair in a few days.

"With best remembrances to Tupman and Winkle, believe me yours most truly,

"Augustus Snodgrass.

"P. S.—Inspector Higgs and Policeman Smill are again using every exertion to discover the assassin."

"This is a very extraordinary communication," said Mr. Pickwick, as he leisurely folded up the letter, and conveyed it to his pocket.

"Most mysterious affair," observed Mr. Tupman. "I wonder what sort of a looking girl Signora Sqorlini was."

"It certainly is an intricate business," added Mr. Winkle. "But instead of wasting our time in thinking of it, we had better attend to the arrangements necessary for the party this evening."

"Winkle is right," said Mr. Pickwick, hastily. "For my part, I have still a call to make—I forgot yesterday to invite our friend Scuttle."

"How many will there be?" enquired Mr. Tupman.

"About eight of us altogether, I believe," answered Mr. Pickwick; "for your friend Walker, Tupman, promised to bring a couple of gentlemen with him in order to make up two rubbers."

"And pray who are they all?" demanded Mr. Winkle.

"Our three selves," readily replied Mr. Pickwick, counting upon his fingers—"Mr. Scuttle, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Chitty—that's six—and Walker's two friends, make eight."

"I promised to meet Walker, to see about the music, this morning," said Mr. Tupman, rising from the breakfast-table, and surveying himself in the looking-glass with an air of peculiar complacency and satisfaction.

"Very well," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, displaying his usual presence of mind and extraordinary calmness on this as well as on every other occasion;—"you had better go at once, Tupman, to secure the musicians; you, Winkle, will stay at home to arrange the supper with Sam and the cook; and I will just step up to the Rue Taitbout and invite Mr. Scuttle."

Mr. Tupman and Mr. Pickwick accordingly issued from their abode to execute their several commissions, and Mr. Winkle summoned Mr. Weller to his presence to discuss the important matter of supper.

"Sam," said Mr. Winkle, when that gentleman had made his appearance, "we are going to have a small party this evening."

"Any petticuts, Sir?" enquired Mr. Weller, abruptly.

"No, Sam," answered Mr. Winkle, adopting the same strain of oriental allegory—"all breeches."

"That don't perwent married vimen from bein' present, Sir," observed Mr. Weller; "some on 'em is so wery full o' sperets, they'd put on the emperor's tights and gaiters, Sir, sooner than not vear the breeches at all."

"Would they, indeed, though?" said Mr. Winkle, somewhat incredulously.

"Vould they not, Sir?" rejoined Mr. Weller. "To be sure they vould—and vithout delay, too, as the wery polite minister said to the poor leftenant as asked for permotion. Vimen is terrible wixens at times."

"But you are married yourself, Sam?" suggested Mr. Winkle.

"So air you, Sir—and so vos my unfortunate friend, Tom Snell, the thimble-rig man, afore he shut his-self up in the vorkus in downright despair."

"Well—but about this party, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, somewhat impatiently.

"There'll be a supper, s'pose?" suggested Mr. Weller.

Mr. Winkle nodded an affirmative.

"English or French style?" demanded Sam.

"Why—the guests are all English—and so the supper may as well be," reasoned Mr. Winkle with admirable logic.

"Just so," said Mr. Weller. "Let's give 'em a reglar English turn out, as the King remarked ven he asked the French Ambassador to dine off a leg o' mutton and ingun sauce."

"That is precisely my idea," coincided Mr. Winkle. "What shall we have, Sam?"

"Biled tripe ain't no bad thing, Sir," answered the valet; "an' beef-steak puddin' is better than nothin' at all."

"Are they good things for supper, Sam?" demanded the gentleman whom Mr. Pickwick, with his usual prudence, had left to cater in his absence.

"No fault to be found vith them 'ere, Sir, as the dentist said to the lady ven he drew the wrong teeth. But I tell you vot it is," added Mr. Weller, applying his finger to his nose and considerably disturbing both; "leave the arrangement of the grubbin' part of the vork to me, and I'll be bound the gov'nor shan't repent the depittyship."

Mr. Winkle yielded to Sam's persuasion, after a moment's reflection, and thus terminated the important consultation in a manner about as satisfactory as if it had been the result of a ministerial debate on some measure calculated to assist the starving poor of England.

At seven o'clock in the evening, the apartments, occupied by the Pickwickians, were one blaze of light, and one echo of laughter and glee. At a little distance from the drawing-room fire were ranged the founders of the feast, and their several guests. Mr. Tupman was in the easy chair—Mr. Winkle was in ecstasies—and Mr. Pickwick in pumps and silk stockings. Next to the first-named gentleman, was Mr. Hook Walker, whose clothes, had they not been seen by candle-light, would have entitled him to the gratifying distinction of the Genius of Seediness; but being deeply in his tradesmen's debt, it may very well be inferred that he was not a little in their good books. At Mr. Pickwick's right hand sate Mr. Septimus Chitty, Author of the "Creation," &c., &c., and exhaling from his scented cambric handkerchief as extensive an atmosphere of lavendar-water as if he had been a walking Sultan. Mr. Scuttle was also there; and he seemed so exceedingly fat, that he might well have been taken into consideration by the Municipal Corporation Bill, had such a measure at that period engaged the attention of the English senate.

Next to Mr. Scuttle was a tall, good-looking young gentleman, of about two-and-twenty, with very long hair curling over his back, and a slight appendage of the same to his upper lip. He wore a light blue stock, a figured black silk waistcoat, three watch-chains, gold studs to his shirt, magnificent rings on his finger, black coat and trowsers, and patent leather boots. At the first cursory glance, he might have been mistaken for an itinerant jeweller's shop; but a moment's consideration would enable the most opaque mind to come to the conclusion, that he had merely profited by the kindness of a tradesman who had evidently had faith enough to remove entire chains—of mountains.

This phenomenon was supported by a youth who might very well have been taken for the David to his Goliath of a companion. He

also wore long ringlets and a plurality of chains, and was attired in a green cut-away coat with brass buttons, the remainder of his attire, with the exception of his linen, being jet black. To be brief, there was a kind of out-and-out rakish and knowing appearance about these two gentlemen, that qualified them amazingly well for their respective names, the former delighting in the appellation of Peacock, and the latter illustrating the patronymic of Brandenbergh.

"Capital fun, wasn't it Peacock?" blandly appealed Mr. Brandenbergh to his friend, to prevent the possibility of his ever being distantly suspected of leasing.

"Rummest lark I ever had," was the reply, corroborative of the truth of a tale just invented and related by his companion.

"I should think it must have been very amusing," observed Mr. Pickwick, waking up from a doze of ten minutes, during which Mr. Brandenbergh's tale had lasted.

"Why, what do you think?" continued Mr. Brandenbergh, after a moment's prudent reflection: "the lawyers, who chiefly employ the gentleman with whom I am studying for the bar, are such sharp fellows that they advertise something in the following terms:—'Messieurs Hookem and Sharpe beg to inform their friends and the public, that they undertake, at every court, to carry gentlemen through any ordeal which violation of the laws may have subjected them to; that the counsel they employ are peculiarly happy in confounding witnesses during cross-examination; and that they have already saved several noblemen and gentlemen from the gallows, transportation, and the treadmill, respectively for great or minor offences. Business done on ready money terms only.'—What do you think of that for a specimen of the practice of Hookem and Sharpe, who moreover undertake to bribe sheriffs' officers, prove *alibis*, get a man straw bail? &c., &c., &c."

Mr. Pickwick *did* think that two more unmitigated rogues than the legal gentlemen alluded to, were not at that moment unhung; but he contented himself with an expression of astonishment at their great and versatile talents in every branch of their profession.

"Ah!" continued Mr. Brandenbergh, to the infinite delight of Mr. Pickwick; "it is no wonder that they did well; for they commenced upon an excellent foundation. They purchased a business in which ninety-seven suits-at-law, with rich and obstinate clients, had been already commenced; and they bought up at five *per cent.* all the bad bills of the young men about London. That was the way to get on in the profession, and I'm glad I belong to it. But they were born lawyers, you may say; and I only came into the full possession of my talents when I was about twenty-one."

"And a very pretty little reversion it must have been," said Mr. Pickwick, innocently, as he awoke from his third doze. Mr. Brandenbergh looked confused—Mr. Peacock politely requested Mr. Pickwick to "go it again," encouraging him at the same time so to do by calling him "a good old fellow"—and the remainder of the party sipped the wine from the glasses they held in their hands.

"Pray," said Mr. Winkle, addressing himself to Mr. Peacock, whose *degagé* air he considerably admired, "have you left London long, Sir?"

"Oh! no—no—I can't say that I have, "was the reply. "I and my friend Brandenbergh are just come for a little excursion, and because the sheriffs of London and Middlesex were too pressing in their invitations—"

"I believe that the city authorities in London are generally kind and affable to their acquaintances?" gravely remarked Mr. Pickwick.

"Very," echoed Messieurs Peacock and Brandenbergh, with ill-suppressed laughter.

"It is a part of their system," added Mr. Walker.

"I once wrote a poem in honour of the Lord Mayor," said Mr. Chitty; "but he never acknowledged the compliment. I had a very great mind—*magnum animum*—to send him another."

"That would have been punishing him too severely," remarked Mr. Peacock. "But, if I'm not mistaken, Sir, you seem well acquainted with the Latin language?"

"Yes, Sir—I flatter myself, Sir—that is," began Mr. Septimus Chitty, "that I am *not* an indifferent scholar. 'Twas I, Sir, who first promulgated the idea that the ancients rode in coaches and public conveyances, Sir—and that even the Grecians had *omnibuses* in common amongst them."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick, somewhat astonished at this vast display of erudition. "And pray, Mr. Chitty, what makes you think so?"

"The Eton Latin Grammar, to be sure," returned the poet with a triumphant smile, "in which you will find the quotation '*Dores in omnibus*'—the Dorians in omnibuses—'travelled' understood."

No one could resist the force of this argument; and Mr. Pickwick exclaimed "Capital—so it is!" several times, an ejaculation in which he was heartily joined by Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle, who looked very much like men perfectly convinced of a difficult matter.

"Very extraordinary!" observed Mr. Scuttle, after a momentary pause: "but not so singular as the fact of my opening the door of my carriage this morning for the horse to get in, and then harnessing myself to the vehicle."

"God bless me!" cried Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands together in order to express his mirth through the *medium* of a novel expedient: "that was one of the most remarkable feats you have yet performed."

"Last night," continued Mr. Scuttle, "I was at a party where there was music; and when a gentleman offered me the flute to play an air, I shortly after stirred the fire with the instrument, and began blowing the poker."

"Well—that was *dives*—rich," exclaimed Mr. Chitty, with considerable emphasis upon the verb, in the employment of which he exhibited no small degree of assurance. "But I am afraid," he whispered to Mr. Pickwick, "that our absent friend is a little inclined to cut it fat—*scindere pingue*—on certain occasions."

As the conversation now languished for a few minutes, Mr. Pickwick proposed cards, and Mr. Weller was forthwith summoned to arrange the tables.

"Two fiddles an' a drum is a-vaitin' outside, Sir, in the antechamber," said Mr. Weller in a whisper to his master.

"Ah!" responded Mr. Pickwick in the same low tone. "Tupman did not forget the music, then. But let them wait, Sam, till supper-time."

"Wery good, Sir," said Mr. Weller, approvingly.

"I suppose Mr. Winkle took care to see about the supper, Sam—did he not? for I myself couldn't interfere," continued Mr. Pickwick.

"Right as a trivet, Sir," returned Mr. Weller. "There ain't no turtle—and there ain't no wenson; but there's as tidy a little spread as ever von 'ud vish for to see."

"That will do, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, whose expressive countenance beamed with philanthropy and satisfaction.

"Don't you be afeerd, Sir," rejoined Mr. Weller: "I'm vide avake, as the sumnambalist said ven his nose come in contect vith the door-post;"—and with these words, Mr. Weller hastened to arrange the two card-tables, upon which he placed the necessary packs and the small quantities of markers for a couple of rubbers of whist. Having thus obeyed his master's directions, he smiled significantly for the behoof of Mr. Winkle to intimate that the supper was getting on to his entire satisfaction, and then retired to the kitchen to drink a social glass of brandy-and-water with the two fiddles and the drum.

Two rubbers of whist were speedily arranged under the auspices of Mr. Pickwick; and the gentlemen accordingly took their seats at the card-tables, at the first of which Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman had to play against Mr. Peacock and Mr. Brandenbergh, while Mr. Scuttle and Mr. Chitty were the antagonists of Mr. Walker and Mr. Winkle at the second. No Panorama, Diorama, Georama, or Neorama, was ever more truly beautiful and attractive than the scene which was now presented by the drawing-room in which the above-named gentlemen were seated; and the good understanding that appeared to exist between Messieurs Peacock and Brandenbergh, especially as they were not opposed to each other, was not the least amusing and remarkable portion of the entertainment. Certain it is that they both held their cards in so awkward a manner, that if they had chosen to look into each other's hands, and they very likely did, the result of the game could not long remain a mystery.

"*Bené lusus*—well played," exclaimed Mr. Chitty. "So, *scinde via*—cut away, and let us have another rubber before supper."

"That was a part of your system, it seems," observed Mr. Hook Walker.

"I played it in a fit of absence, and by mistake," modestly replied Mr. Scuttle, as he seized hold of Mr. Winkle's hand to snuff the candle with that gentleman's fingers, a mistake which, when discovered, was heartily laughed at.

"I don't know how you are getting on there," said Mr. Pickwick, casting a glance of benevolence and philanthropy at the second table; "but I and Tupman have as yet lost every rubber."

"Odd—this run of luck, isn't it, old fellow?" demanded Mr. Peacock, in a tone of modest appeal to his friend Brandenbergh, as if there were really any thing extraordinary in the several results of the games.

"Very," said Mr. Brandenbergh, as he took a pretty long survey

into his partner's hand, and then cast a cursory glance over those of Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman, the effect of which scrutiny was the immediate termination of the seventh rubber in favour of himself and partner. At this crisis, Mr. Weller made his appearance, and hastened to speak in a most mysterious tone to Mr. Pickwick.

"Ten is it, Sam?" enquired that great man, valiantly essaying to rise from his chair in spite of the conspiracy instituted against him by sundry glasses of Bordeaux-Laffitte and rum-punch. He, however, with a little difficulty, eventually performed the *feat*, and got upon his own, to the ineffable admiration of his attentive domestic.

"Ten it is, Sir," said Mr. Weller; "and supper's a-vaitin'." Then in a low voice he whispered in his venerated master's ear—"Come, now—don't you go and get into the wrong box, as the judge said to the thief as comed to vitness in favour of another thief; cos you're rayther fresh as it is—and them new-comers is precious jokers anyhow. You'd only make a old scare-crow o' yourself."

Mr. Pickwick dealt a look of the deepest contempt, mingled with indignation, at the head of his faithful domestic, and, without deigning a reply to the aforesaid advice, requested his friends to walk into the supper-room, an invitation that was immediately accepted, there being a species of scuffle between the poetic Mr. Septimus Chitty and the systematic Mr. Hook Walker, with regard to precedency, a point that was speedily decided by the superior strength of the latter.

When the company was seated at the table, Mr. Weller proceeded to uncover the dishes with a species of satisfaction and triumph that elicited a torrent of applauding smiles from Mr. Pickwick, and impelled Mr. Winkle into a perfect paroxysm of gaiety and mirth. And truly never was a more delicate assortment of provisions set upon a convivial board. The first dish contained an immense beef-steak pudding, that had unfortunately burst in being extricated from the pot—the second, about six pounds of boiled tripe—the third, a pleasing *quantum* of bubble-and-squeak—the fourth, a toad-in-the-hole—the fifth, a bullock's heart roasted—and the sixth, a dainty selection of pork-pies. Messieurs Peacock and Brandenbergh exchanged suspicious glances—Mr. Scuttle fancied he was in an English eating-house, and desired Mr. Pickwick, in a peremptory tone, to "fire away"—Mr. Walker commenced a desperate attack upon the boiled tripe, declaring that a good appetite was a part of his system—Mr. Chitty affirmed that it was a "*magnificus spargo*," a magnificent spread—and the three founders of the feast looked aghast when the unsaintly contents of the several dishes were disclosed to view.

"A wery tidy dis-play it is, too," observed Mr. Weller, "vich vos the remark made by the gen'leman ven he see the prisoners in the King's Bench Prison. But precious hard vork I had to make our gal comprehend the nature of them dishes. I thought, however, I'd give you a riglar John Bull's turn out for vonce in a vay. So, pitch into 'em gen'lemen, as the magistrate said to the soldiers ven he'd read the riot-hact."

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, in a mysterious tone of voice.

"Sir," cried the faithful valet.

"Let the music be introduced," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, a glow of honest pride animating his benevolent countenance; for, as he gazed

around, he saw that he was supported by numerous friends—and he felt that he had done every thing to promote the hilarity of the evening, which indeed he had to the best of his ability, having caused the punch to be circulated no less than seven times before supper, and having drank deeply thereof on each occasion.

"Please, Sir," remonstrated Mr. Weller, "the music can't be introduced not by no means."

"Why not, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, somewhat angrily.

"Cos, Sir," was Mr. Weller's ingenuous and candid reply, "the drum's so precious drunk, and the two fiddles is so wery quarrelsome, that I can't get 'em to ac-cord in any other vay than in drinkin' till they can't see, and in that they seems to be vell qualified to keep time vith each other."

"I'm afraid, then, gentlemen," said Mr. Pickwick, "that we shall be obliged to dispense with the music for this evening."

"Oh! never mind," interrupted Mr. Scuttle, as he quietly poured some boiling gravy into the hollow of Mr. Chitty's hand, instead of conveying the same to his own plate: "I dare say we shall do very well without it."

"So the boy said, Sir," illustrated Mr. Weller, "ven his master couldn't find the birch-rod steeped in winegar.—Beg pardon, Sir," continued Sam, addressing himself to Mr. Pickwick, "but is the bubble-and-sqveak good?"

"Excellent, Sam," replied that gentleman.

"I'll trouble you for some, then, Mr. Scuttle," said Mr. Hook Walker; "it is a part of my system to taste every thing that is good."

"Know how to com-pose it?" demanded Mr. Weller, abruptly, and with a sly wink at Messieurs Peacock and Brandenbergh, whereat those young gentlemen almost went into ecstacies.

"Can't say I do," returned Mr. Walker: "it is not a very essential part—"

"Fust get the beef and the greens," interrupted Mr. Weller, just as Mr. Scuttle consigned the entire supply of the viand solicited by Mr. Walker to his own especial plate, and considerately forwarded that gentleman the empty dish. Thence sprung an immediate remonstrance, as speedy a rectification of the mistake, and a total oblivion of the *recipe* on the part of Mr. Weller.

"Come—come—that's not fair—*non pulcher est*," exclaimed Mr. Septimus Chitty. "Let us, therefore, restore good humour by drinking a bumper *rotundus*—round."

Mr. Pickwick's head fell upon his hand, and his elbow upon the table: the movement was considered to be expressive of assent, and Mr. Chitty's proposition was immediately adopted and carried into effect. At this moment the door opened, and M. Dumont, who had promised to look in in the course of the evening, made his appearance. This was the signal for an increase of mirth and laughter—the glass circulated freely—the Gendarme soon rendered himself agreeable to the whole company, not even excepting Messieurs Peacock and Brandenbergh—the conversation turned upon M. Vidocq and the recovery of Mr. Tupman's watch—and one of his amusing tales terminated the entertainment of the evening. Mr. Tupman entered the particulars of Dumont's

story in his note-book on the following morning; and it is from that authentic source that we are enabled to lay the ensuing interesting narrative, in which some particulars connected with Vidocq occur, before our readers.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GAMBLER.—A TALE.

THE LOST LETTER.—A GAMING-HOUSE IN THE PALAIS ROYAL.—EMILIE D'ARLY.—THE DESPERATE ATTEMPT.—M. VIDOCQ.—THE RESULT.

THE tale which I am about to relate, will not only introduce the celebrated Vidocq to your notice, but will also give you an idea of the secret service in which the French Police is occasionally employed, and at the same time exhibit in all its worst colours the consequences of that most deadly and baneful of vices—Gaming!

I was one afternoon summoned to the Prefecture de Police, and introduced to the presence of M. de Limeul. This gentleman was the secretary to the Sub-Prefect: and he desired me to be seated with an unusual degree of courtesy, as he prepared to enter upon the matter in which he required my service.

"Dumont," began M. de Limeul; "a young gentleman applied yesterday afternoon at the Prefecture to have his passport signed for Calais; and he inadvertently dropped a certain document—an unsealed letter, in fine—which—"

"Fell into your hands," said I, willing to relieve M. de Limeul from the unpleasant task of recounting the pryings and suspicions of a base curiosity.

"You have guessed it, Dumont," said the secretary, with a patronising smile. "Here is the letter—read it."

M. de Limeul handed me the epistle, which I opened and perused; and as nearly as I can now recollect, the contents ran as follows:—

"Dearest Henri,

"How often have I prophesied that gambling would eventually prove your ruin! You remain absent from me during a whole night—you write to me in the morning to inform me of your almost irredeemable losses—and you desire me to prepare myself either for a sudden journey to England, with a large fortune at our command, or to remain in poverty and disgrace at Paris.

"You say you are obliged to present yourself at the Prefecture at an early hour to have your passport signed—you write to me from the house of a friend—you desire me to be happy—you apologize for your seeming neglect (a neglect, alas! to which I am now too much accustomed to be astonished at it) in not returning home if it were even only for a minute—and you tell me *that to-morrow evening will decide your fate.* Have I not often said that though a gambler may prosper

for a short time, a sudden reverse will one day most certainly overwhelm him? O Henri, what does all this mean? My mind, already too deeply wounded—I do not mean to reproach—has strange misgivings—my heart is replete with sadness. Pardon me for having recapitulated the contents of your letter; but my affection for you, Henri—and, oh! you know I have loved you as never yet woman loved, Henri—I have cherished your image in my heart from the first moment of our acquaintance—I have nursed you in sickness—I have smiled in the midst of grief to dissipate the dark clouds that hung over your brow—I have supported your indifference, your neglect, and your occasional cruelty. May I not, therefore, say that my affection for you has alone dictated this hasty scrawl—that my love, my deep—sincere—unchangeable love—must plead as extenuation for the tenour of this letter.

"In haste, your most affectionate wife,

"EMILIE D'ARLY.

"Rue Neuve des Mathurins, No. 20."

"And what is his lordship's pleasure?" said I, as de Limeul received the affecting epistle from my hand.

"D'Arly meditates some crime!" exclaimed de Limeul hastily.

"Or rather he means to essay his luck once more at the gaming-table," I observed, with all due submission and respect.

"Dumont, I thought you were more cunning," cried the secretary: "wherefore this sudden arrangement for a prompt departure? Wherefore this determination to have recourse to some desperate measure to re-establish his fallen fortunes? and why should he be so anxious to bear with him to a foreign land the moneys of which he hopes Fortune may put him in the possession?"

"True," said I, ashamed of my own want of penetration.

"Do you know Monsieur D'Arly?" enquired the secretary.

"I do," was the reply.

"How?" said the secretary.

"His nightly haunts are the gaming-houses in the Palais-Royal: I have frequently seen him playing heavy stakes in those dens."

"Will you take upon yourself to watch his motions, and ascertain the nature of the resolutions he may have adopted to retrieve his late losses?" said the secretary.

"I will, Monsieur de Limeul," was my reply; and he waved his hand as a signal of dismissal.

So soon as I had issued from the gloomy walls of the Prefecture, I returned with all possible haste to my lodgings in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, and having doffed my uniform, assumed the plain clothes of a sober and quiet citizen. I then proceeded to the Palais-Royal, and ascended a steep stair-case leading to an extensive suite of apartments on the first floor. An ill-looking fellow gave me admittance, and inquired the nature of my business, which having explained, I was ushered into a small *cabinet* where sate the *genius loci*, in all his glory.

He was an individual of about forty years of age; but untimely wrinkles were traced upon his cheeks. His eyes were dark and sunken; his features were pointed and angular; his looks were suspi-

cious—his frame nervous—and his hands trembled violently. He wore a faded blue velvet cap upon his head—his limbs were wrapped in a soiled party-coloured dressing-gown—and his feet were thrust into immense slippers that almost effectually concealed the dirty stockings he was not ashamed to wear. His shirt was tumbled; the bosom of it was stained with wine; and two or three buttons were wanting. A bottle of claret, half emptied, and a glass, stood on the table before him, amidst a heap of cards, dice, backgammon-boxes, and a quantity of dirty papers covered with figures that indicated deep calculations of the odds and chances of some game. Two or three dice were cut in halves, and evinced proofs of having been "loaded;" others were gathered in a separate heap together, and ticketed with some flash word. Such a scene of dissipation, debauchery, filth, and squalid grandeur never before existed. The furniture was costly in the extreme; but the scarlet cushions of the chairs were stained with wine or grease. The curtains were rich and elegantly hung; but here and there they exhibited the marks of having been injured by candles, and wantonly perforated by foils. The magnificent looking-glass that ornamented the mantel-piece, was cracked across the middle; the clock had lost one of its hands; and the flowers that had formerly embellished the vases, were faded and dead. Such was the appearance of the chamber into which I was shown.

"Oh! Dumont, my worthy friend," cried the hell-keeper—for such you may readily have supposed the individual, already described, to be—"what news this afternoon?"

"I am come to learn some, instead of communicating any," was my reply. "How fared you last evening?"

"Admirably well!" returned the chief of that *pandemonium*: "the bullying Captain de Bellois dropped fifty thousand francs—his cousin, the Count de Lille, lost nearly as much—and young D'Arly, who had already been playing at *Frascati's*, was entirely cleaned out."

"So the evening was favourable," I remarked with an air of partial indifference. "And pray might I ask what was the amount of D'Arly's losses?"

"A cool twenty thousand francs—nothing more!" was the answer, accompanied by a triumphant smile. "The silly fool! He tore his hair—beat his breast—and actually threatened, in a moment of rabid despair, to rob the bank!"

"Ah!" ejaculated I—"he menaced you with that—did he?"

"Oh! it was but an idle threat. He soon recovered his wonted coolness, and retired to sup at Véfour's with de Bellois and de Lille, with whom he suddenly appeared to be on very intimate terms."

"D'Arly is a great gambler—is he not?" I enquired.

"I should fancy he must be upon your list," was the observation in answer to my demand; "if not—write him down."

I drew my tablets from my pocket, and wrote the following words to the dictation of the hell-keeper.

"Henri D'Arly—lives in the Rue Neuve des Mathurins—is about twenty-five years of age—has been married four years—is supposed to have lost at *Frascati's*, the day after he attained his majority, a hundred thousand francs—boasted on that occasion that he had six times as much left in the French funds—never won five thousand

francs at the Palais-Royal at one time—was once suspected of forgery, but hushed up the matter—is now supposed to be entirely ruined."

"A pretty character!" cried I, as I returned my tablets—those tablets on which was written the description of many an individual—to my pocket. I then whispered a few but impressive words of necessary caution in the ears of the gaming-house-keeper, and withdrew to proceed one step farther in the execution of my duty and the orders of the secretary de Limeul.

I issued from the Palais-Royal into the Rue de Richelieu, thence to the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, and hastened to the abode of the afflicted Madame D'Arly. After some delay, I was ushered into her presence; but when my eyes first fell upon her countenance, I was stupified, as it were, at the sight of her extraordinary beauty. She had risen to receive me, and her graceful attitude developed her lovely figure to advantage. She was tall and admirably formed; her light flaxen hair fell upon a neck and shoulders of dazzling whiteness, and partly concealed a bosom that heaved against the pressure of a *corset* adapted to display her voluptuous form. She rather resembled the fine and full-grown women of England, than the more delicate daughters of France. My confusion was only momentary—it was, however, noticed and acknowledged by the blush that mounted on her cheek—and then I was requested to explain the motives of my visit.

"I believe I have the honour of addressing Madame D'Arly?"

The reply was of course in the affirmative.

"The amiable spouse of M. D'Arly?"

"The same—" said the lady, hastily, and somewhat alarmed; "but, pray, what mean these queries?"

"I am afraid, Madam," said I, "that M. D'Arly has lately been unfortunate in—in—"

"In what?" cried the beautiful Emilie, somewhat impatiently.

"In his speculations," said I, desirous of sparing the use of harsh words.

"At the gaming-table! you would add," observed Madame D'Arly with a bitter smile, and a look that expressed the acutest mental agony.

"And he is likely to continue a loser, Madam," I exclaimed, with considerable emphasis.

"Sir," said the lady, rising, "your observations are most singular—your conversation alarms me. Either impertinent curiosity, or a friendly motive, has sent you hither. Before we discourse more intimately on these matters—for such appears your aim—allow me to be acquainted with your name."

"My name is Dumont, at your service," was my reply; "and I am a well-wisher to D'Arly, without having the honour of his acquaintance. But to be brief,—let him not visit the Palais-Royal this evening; but desire him to call upon me, to-morrow morning, at my lodgings in the Faubourg Saint Antoine; and he may not repent his visit. This is the card of my address."

I rose to depart,—but my feet remained rooted to the spot. Emilie's cheeks were white as marble.

"Fear nothing, dear Madam," I cried: "the evil may still be remedied. Your husband stands on the verge of a dangerous precipice—his evil genius is hastening him towards the abyss—and his resolu-

tion is frail and feeble. You—Madam—his wife—you must seek him out—'tis for you to undertake that important task—and, if you love him, Madam—warn him—bid him beware, Madam—not to set foot in the Palais-Royal this evening. To-morrow I will explain all;—at present, I can say no more!"

Emilie fell back upon the sofa, crying, "O God! what new afflictions have you in store for me? what have I done to merit thy displeasure?"

I dared not attempt to soothe her—I seated myself once more—and maintained a long unbroken silence, during which Madame D'Arly gave way to the wildness of a grief that developed itself in the most appalling paroxysms. Presently she became calm, and turning towards me, said, "Sir, whoever you may be—you are evidently a friend—a guardian angel sent to warn my husband of his desperate situation. And I love that husband, Sir—oh! I love him beyond all power of description. I dote upon him, despite of his unkindness towards me—I cling to him the more firmly, as his predicament becomes the more deplorable. I refuse with scorn the base offers of the nobles of the land, who would probably treat me with affectionate solicitude—but I would not leave my unfortunate Henri—Henri, the being for whom I have sacrificed so much, endured so much, and shall yet have to pass through so much—Oh! no, not for all the world!"—and she wept bitterly—so bitterly indeed, that the tears trickled down my cheeks as well.

Another pause ensued, which was at length broken by the afflicted lady, as before. Suddenly starting from a reverie of woe, she cried in so wild a tone that I was at first alarmed for the state of her intellects, "Sir—do you know how acutely felt are the tortures of suspense?"

"Not, perhaps, to the same extent as yourself, Madam," was my almost incoherent reply, so deeply was I affected.

"But, if you have ever felt one hundredth part of those tortures which I now feel—I conjure you to relieve my anxiety! Let me know the dreadful truth at once:—what evil awaits my husband this night more especially than on any other? How came you to be acquainted with the desperate state of his circumstances? and what can you reveal to-morrow morning, that I may not know at the present moment?"

"Madam!" I exclaimed, "I take heaven and earth to witness that this must remain a mystery until to-morrow morning:—to-night I have a certain duty to perform—a duty imperatively binding—a duty, in fine, from which I cannot retreat. This night once past—and if your husband shall have followed my advice—he is safe! Let him pursue the contrary route—and he is lost!"

I rose to depart—Emilie came towards me—took me by the hand and said, "Thanks—a thousand thanks for your kindness. I was wrong in endeavouring to learn your secrets; but, oh! you know not to what extremities woman's love will urge her. Save my Henri, *Monsieur*—save him—and I will pray for you—I will worship you—I will love you as a friend—as a sister should love. Oh! save him—I implore you—and the blessing of an omnipotent and all-seeing Judge will ever follow you.—Adieu—and forget not to save my dear lost husband!"

Having uttered these words in a scarcely audible tone, and in a

voice that was frequently interrupted by loud sobs which she in vain endeavoured to suffocate, Emilie D'Arly hastened out of the room, leaving me in a state of mind not easily conceived. Some minutes elapsed before I thought of retiring from the apartment; then, collecting my scattered ideas and remembering the business I had in view, I hastily returned to my lodgings. And then there arose in my mind a confusion of ideas, that gradually formed themselves into a distinct comparison between the afflicted wife I had just left, and the remorseless husband I was endeavouring to save from ruin:—the one so pure and spotless—the other so tainted and criminal; the one affectionate and forgiving—the other neglectful and unkind; the one belonging to a celestial sphere—the other attached to the grossest pleasures of life; the one whom you could fall down and worship—the other whose friendship you would scorn; the one chaste and virtuous—the other impure and vicious; the one, in fine, all that is beautiful and divine—and the other all that is dissipated and licentious.

But to proceed. At about nine o'clock I repaired to the Palais-Royal. It was in the month of June—the gay—the laughing—the

smiling month of June—when the gay resorts of the fashionable world of Paris are the most frequented—when the cafés are crowded with elegantly dressed people—when ices, lemonade, and orange-flower water are discussed with peculiar *goût*—when the Champs Elysées re-echo to the music of Franconi, or of the various surrounding *guingettes*—when the fume of the cigar mingles with the fragrance of sweet flowers—when every heart is light, and when nature itself is radiant with joy. At that season of the year how delicious a resort is the Palais Royal! That magnificent monument, raised by one of the greatest princes that ever swayed the sceptre of France, is *unique* and unequalled by aught in the cities of other nations, and may alone enable Paris to assert her superiority as a metropolis over every other in the world. The lofty colonnades—the splendid shops—the inviting display of luxuries in the windows of the *cafés*—afford a spectacle at once imposing and luxurious.

I was about to ascend the narrow staircase which I had mounted in the morning, and which, as the courteous reader will please to recollect, led to a suite of apartments in which the gambler might gratify

his infernal passion—when a gentleman accosted me, and drew me aside.

"What news?" said M. de Limeul—for it was he.

"Patience, Sir," was my reply; "and to-morrow morning you shall know all."

"Well--well," cried the secretary, with unusual good humour; "I know you Gendarmes are not accustomed to be put out of your way by useless interrogations; so I shall not question you farther. One thing, by the bye, I must inform you of; and that is, D'Arly made application this evening at the Prefecture to enquire if any letter addressed to him had been found in the passport office."

"And of course," said I, "a reply was given in the negative."

"Certainly," exclaimed M. de Limeul; "and an hour after his departure I received a visit from the chief of the Committee of Public Safety—"

"What! Vidocq himself?" cried I in astonishment.

"The celebrated Vidocq himself!" continued the overjoyed secretary; "the prince of escaped galley-slaves—the king of adventurers—the hero of Arras—the member of the Army of the Moon—the president, in fine, of the police for the maintenance of public tranquillity!"

"It could have been no common bribe—" I began.

"Hush!" interrupted de Limeul. "Walls have ears—and the agents of Vidocq have as many ears as eyes. The very echoes of the Palais Royal are pregnant with information and interest for Vidocq. Suffice it to know that he was foiled in his aim—and that for once we shall outwit the cunning fox who has outwitted foxes themselves."

I saluted de Limeul as he uttered these words, and was not a little pleased to think that I already began to enjoy the confidence of the Sub-Prefect's secretary. He returned my bow with a species of familiarity which added to my satisfaction, and continued his walk along the colonnade, while I, on my part, repaired to the gambling-house, at which a variety of circumstantial evidence and shrewd conjecture had led me to believe that the misguided D'Arly intended to put some desperate design into execution, unless his wife should have been fortunate enough to have found him, and dissuaded him from any daring attempt or nefarious practice he might have meditated. At all events I was satisfied with myself: I had even partially overstept the boundaries of duty to rest a moment within the confines of mercy; and had acted humanely and prudently at the same time; for, according to the ethics which the dictates of my own mind suggest, and which my Christian feelings consecrate and legitimatize, it is better to prevent the commission of a crime than suffer the malefactor to perpetrate it, when you are aware of his intentions. The ends of public justice are more readily answered by the suppression than the punishment of vice.

When I first entered the *salon*, there were very few people at the *rouge-et-noir* table. It was as yet early; and the adjacent theatres had not closed. I was, however, pleased at being in good time; for I was determined to do my duty, in case necessity should put my fidelity to my employers to the test. In the morning I had acted as a man; at present I was resolved to behave as a Gendarme!

It was nearly twelve o'clock, and large sums had already exchanged

owners, when the door was opened with violence, and M. D'Arly entered the room. He was accompanied by Captain de Bellois and the Comte de Lille—two individuals as notorious as their companion for licentiousness of habits, and viciousness of pursuits. You must be informed that circumstances have endowed the Gendarme with a certain penetration and instinct which cause him to see deeply into things the very surface of which would not strike a common observer. Thus was it that, the moment those three gentlemen drew nigh the gaming-table, I saw they were armed. A shudder came over me—for I thought of the unhappy—the beautiful Emilie. Her weeping countenance was vividly depicted to my faithful memory!

Henri D'Arly commenced by putting down a few pieces, which he immediately lost, and I noticed his lip quiver and his hand tremble violently as he watched the chances of the game. Captain de Bellois preserved a strict silence; while the Count, with folded arms, leant against the wall, and kept his eyes immoveably fixed upon his young friend D'Arly. 'Twas horrible to gaze upon the countenances of those three desperate men! D'Arly's cheek was ashy pale—his eyes beamed with unnatural lustre—his nerves were evidently in an extraordinary state of agitation and excitement. At one moment he clenched his fist and ground his teeth—at another he stamped upon the floor—and then apparently resigned himself to the terrible tranquillity of dumb despair.

It seemed that D'Arly had not carried much money with him to the gaming-house; for in a quarter of an hour he was pennyless. It was then that I began to feel an indescribable anxiety oppressing me; and in all the vicissitudes and adventures of my life, I never experienced such strange and unaccountable emotions as I did on this occasion. The image of the weeping Emilie was ever present to my memory; and there I was, armed against her husband! So soon as I was convinced that D'Arly had been "cleaned out," I rose from my seat and drew near the door, in order to place myself between the table and the only means of safe egress the *salon* afforded. At that instant there were but myself, the two *croupiers*, the master of the hell, and the three friends in the room. The servants were occupied in an adjacent apartment, where the noise of *roulette*, and other amusements, would effectually drown any cries or disturbance that might take place in the *salon* in which we then were. All this my experienced eye discovered in a moment; and I knew that if any desperate deed were meditated, the time of its execution must be now nigh at hand.

Nor was I mistaken. On a sudden D'Arly crossed the room, and placed himself by the side of the keeper of the gaming-house, before whom was a large tin case containing the bank; while the Captain drew near the spot where I was standing. No sooner had the Count noticed these manœuvres than he boldly extinguished the large lamp that hung immediately over the *rouge-et-noir* table. I had suspected, and was prepared for this measure. No sooner were we enveloped in total darkness than I drew a pistol from my pocket—it was only loaded with powder—and immediately fired it. A rush was made towards the door; but I stood with my back against it, and cried in a loud voice—"Gentlemen, I am a Gendarme!" The word "Gendarme" made them recoil for a moment—the door behind me was

flung open, and a party of my own *corps*, who awaited outside the signal agreed upon, burst into the room, at the same time that the waiters and visitors entered from the *roulette* apartments on the opposite side. Lights were immediately brought—the Captain was safely detained in my grasp—and the Count and d'Arly were made prisoners by the Gendarmes whose services I had thus taken the precaution of securing.

"O God! my wife—my wife—my dear, dear—unhappy Emilie!" cried D'Arly as he fainted in the arms of his captors.

"It is all through that chicken-hearted fellow we were induced to participate in this infernal scheme," said the Captain, doggedly: "may curses light upon him!"

"We shall all be requested to proceed on a little excursion to Brest or Toulon together, one fine morning next month," said the Count de Lille, with an indifference to his fate that was really remarkable.

"By God—I will sooner die!" exclaimed the Captain; and in an instant he forced himself from my grasp with Herculean strength, drew a pistol from his bosom, fired it at my head, and rushed from the room with the rapidity of lightning. The movement had been so suddenly executed that surprise for a moment rendered me incapable of acting or even thinking for myself; and the stunning noise of the pistol, the ball of which whizzed close to my right ear, so effectually stupified me that the Captain was enabled to accomplish his escape.

Nothing could equal my rage and indignation at this circumstance; and to add to my annoyance, I was immediately assailed by the gibes of the Count, and the reproaches of my comrades. There was, however, no instantaneous remedy; and we were fain to march off our two remaining prisoners to the guard-house close by. The Commissary of Police of the quarter was speedily summoned—a *proces-verbal* was concocted by that magistrate's *amanuensis*—and the two culprits were transported forthwith to the prison of the Conciergerie, just as the grey dawn of morning appeared in the eastern horizon.

Having thus secured those unfortunate victims to a fatal passion, and consigned them to a gloomy dungeon, I repaired to my lodgings in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, and contrived to snatch a few hours of repose. At seven o'clock I awoke, and again assuming the plain clothes I had worn on the previous afternoon, I sallied forth towards the west end of Paris.

In three quarters of an hour—so great was my speed—I stopped at the gate of the house in which the apartments of Madame D'Arly were situate. Slowly did I ascend the stairs—with a trembling hand did I pull the cord that was attached to the bell—and in a state of inexplicable anxiety was I ushered to the parlour where Emilie was seated on a sofa. Her eyes were red with weeping—her toilet was neglected—her beautiful hair floated negligently over her shoulders. She arose hastily as I entered the room, and seemed about to give utterance to some enquiry; but her tongue refused to perform its vicarious office, and clave to the roof of her mouth.

"Madame D'Arly," said I, "have you received any news concerning your husband?"

She merely shook her head, and sank upon the sofa. My counte-

nance had doubtless portended the terrible tidings that she was doomed to hear.

"You did not see him yesterday, Madam," I continued; "or, if you were so fortunate, he neglected your advice and my injunctions."

"I did not see him, Monsieur Dumont," was the reply—for she now recovered the faculty of speech—"I sought him in vain. I called at all his usual haunts—but he was not to be found.—If you know aught relative to him, keep me not in suspense—Oh! do not torture me—but let me be made acquainted with the worst."

"Your husband, Madam," said I slowly, "went last evening to the Palais Royal—"

"And lost his all—Oh! I thought as much!" screamed the unhappy woman: "and now we are beggars—beggars—without a friend! O God!—O God! what will become of us?"

"Alas! it is sorrowful for me to be the bearer of evil tidings—but—"

"Heavens! explain yourself—my husband—speak, Sir—my husband—is he alive?" cried Emilie, in a tone expressive of the acutest agonies.

"Your husband *is* alive, Madam—but—" and I hesitated.

"But what? Speak, I conjure you—are you come hither to torment me?—speak—I am nerved—Oh! yes, too well nerved to listen to all the horrors you may yet have to unfold," she added in a voice of bitter irony, as if, in the midst of despair, she could dare to laugh at a farther complication of ills.

"Henri D'Arly is in a criminal gaol!" said I, seeing it was impossible to withhold the sad news an instant longer.

One long—loud shriek issued from the lips of the wretched woman, and had I not caught her in my arms, she would have fallen from the sofa to the floor. I summoned her attendants, and consigned my lovely burden to their care, informing them that I was the bearer of unhappy tidings relative to her husband, and that I had chosen to communicate them in person, fearful lest the afflicted wife should have been condemned to peruse an unvarnished and unextenuating account of the transaction in the public journals, or have been informed of Henri's disgrace by some officious person whose want of feeling might cause him to speak in no measured terms. Having thus explained the motives of my visit, and partially accounted for the situation in which Madame D'Arly was discovered by her servants, I retired, and proceeded to the office of the Committee for the Maintenance of Public Security.

"Can I be favoured with ten minutes' audience of Monsieur Vidocq?" was my enquiry of the domestic whom I encountered in the antechamber.

"*Entrez*," replied the servant—and I was ushered into the presence of the most celebrated autobiographer of the age.

"What is your name?" demanded M. Vidocq's somewhat sternly.

"Dumont, at your service," was the respectful answer.

"I have waited for you above an hour," observed Vidocq, suffering his tone to become more conciliatory.

"You waited for me!" exclaimed I in astonishment, well knowing

that I had not breathed my intention of calling upon the great man to a single soul.

"Certainly!" cried M. Vidocq, with a triumphant smile. "You suffered Captain de Bellois to escape last night—and all the cunning of your comrades, Gendarmes as ye are, will not be able to detect his hiding-place without my aid. Did I, therefore, mis-calculate my man? Did I not foresee this visit? O Dumont—Dumont!" he added with an ironical chuckle; "you laughed last night at hearing de Limeul—the poor fool!—talk of out-witting Vidocq; and now you seek my aid and advice!"

"If I uttered any thing disrespectful," I began, more and more astonished at what I heard—"I am sorry—"

"Oh! no—I am accustomed to *hear* myself somewhat singularly spoken of at times, Dumont; and I know that you merely laughed reciprocally to your master's humour. You would have shed tears had he wept: such is human nature!—But, now—with regard to this Captain? Your credit will suffer if he be not found—eh?"

"Beyond all doubt, you are acquainted with my thoughts as well as with my actions," said I submissively.

"Frankly acknowledged, Dumont!" exclaimed Vidocq: then consulting some papers that lay before him, he added in a measured tone of voice as his eye glanced over them—"He must be in the Marais—Rue Charlot—at the house of a woman of the town—Mademoiselle Lemoine—Number 7—where he may be found at this moment. Go—I have put you in the way of regaining your prisoner, Dumont—depart!"—and, without waiting to be thanked, this extraordinary man pushed me gently out of his office.

Overjoyed at the successful result of my visit to M. Vidocq, I immediately jumped into a cabriolet, and, according to his directions, repaired to the Rue Charlot. I alighted from the vehicle at the commencement of the street, and proceeded to the house.

"Does a certain Mademoiselle Lemoine reside here?" enquired I, of the porter who was quietly mending a pair of shoes in his lodge.

"To-morrow afternoon," was the reply.

"Mademoiselle Lemoine?" I cried louder than before; "does she reside here?"

"Oh! I thought you were asking after the pork-butcher's shoes, my friend," returned the porter; "but, tell Mademoiselle Lemoine that I cannot give her any more credit, and that if she receive her lovers so late as two o'clock in the morning—"

I stayed to hear no more—the deaf porter's remark was more than sufficient to corroborate the statement of one whose information was seldom, if ever, found to be incorrect. I accordingly hastened up stairs, opining that the gallant lady resided in the garret—the usual abode of such dames—and knocked at the first door which met my eyes in a long dark gallery on the top floor. A suspicious noise at the lock of the door convinced me that some one was employed to *reconnôitre* the visitor; I therefore, without any more ado, applied a vigorous kick to the fragile barrier, and forced an easy passage into the chamber.

"Upon my word!" cried Mademoiselle Lemoine—for so I supposed

a half-naked, haggard-looking female to be—"here is a pretty disturbance at an honest woman's door, at this unseemly hour."

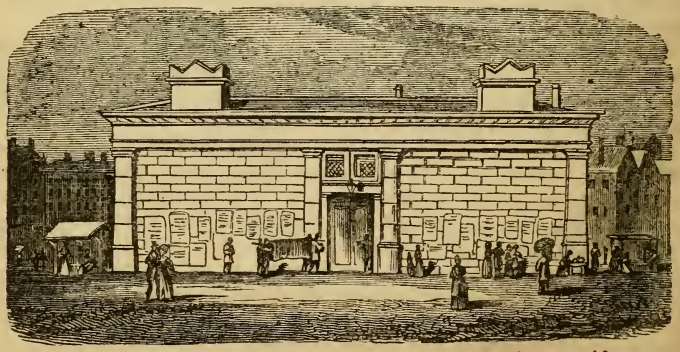
"You were probably awakened out of your sleep somewhat early, *Mademoiselle*," said I with an ironical smile, and casting a scrutinizing glance around the chamber at the same time. "But it appears," I added, looking the young lady full in the face, when my cursory inspection was ended, "that you are married—and therefore ought to call yourself *Madame*—"

"Oh! I beg you not to touch *him*—he is ill—he is dying—and the least exposure—" implored Mademoiselle Lemoine, with a witching smile that, however, failed to captivate my flinty heart.

"I merely wish to look at his face for one moment," said I—and, heedless of the vain appeals and equally vain attempts of the courtezan to prevent me, I dragged the bed-clothes from the individual they concealed, and discovered the magnanimous captain curled up in a fashion that could not but excite my laughter. He did not make use of the slightest efforts to obtain his release, but preserved a dogged silence, while I compelled him to dress himself with all possible despatch, during which ceremony the fair *inamorata* of the noble officer seated herself in a corner and wept.

In a few minutes the captain's toilet was completed, and I requested him to accompany me quietly to the nearest Commissary of Police, assuring him that resistance would be useless, that I would blow his brains out if he attempted any, and that my honour was compromised in the result of my exploit. He did not answer a syllable, but complied with my wishes, and in the course of a couple of hours joined his worthy companions at the Conciergerie. I need scarcely add, that I was more highly delighted at the termination of this adventure in so creditable a way to myself, than I should have been had I delivered up to the hands of justice my three prisoners all at the same time.

A month or six weeks elapsed ere the accused were taken before the Court of Assizes of the Department of the Seine to be tried for the offence with which they had been charged. The cause did not long



occupy the jury; they were found guilty—and the president pronounced sentence—which condemned the captain to work ten years

at the galleys, and the count and D'Arly five each—the circumstance of de Bellois having aimed a deadly weapon against my life, and by those means effected his escape, being considered an aggravation of his crime.

A few days after their trial, the three prisoners set out with "a chain of galley-slaves," as the body of malefactors is called, on the high road to Brest; and at about the same time the disfigured corse of Emilie D'Arly was seen stretched upon one of the loathsome tadles of the Morgue!

CHAPTER XXVI.

MR. WINKLE'S MISTAKE, AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES.—THE JEALOUS COUSIN, AND THE SOJOURN IN THE CUPBOARD.—EMBARRASSED CIRCUMSTANCES OF MADAME DE L'AMOUR.—CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. TUPMAN AND MR. WINKLE.—MR. LIPMAN'S SONG.

The first of April is not less devoted to the community of fools and practical jokers in France than it is in England. Were a register to be kept of all the witty things that are said, and the facetious tricks that are played, upon this day, in the various public offices of the government, or the private ones of attorneys, notaries, stock-brokers, &c., &c., the work would become an authority, and "Joe Miller's Jest Book" be speedily consigned to oblivion. And who in France has not been successfully made a *Poisson d'Avril?* who, to his own inconvenience, has not thereby administered to the inexpressible delight of some pretty *grisette*, some arch wag, or some secret enemy? An invitation to dine at St. Cloud, or Versailles, with a particular friend who happens at the moment to be in America, or on a voyage to China, is the least uncommon of the practical annoyances to which another's wit may subject the unwary one.

Our present business, however, is only connected with the date and not the doings of the first day of the fourth month of the year eighteen hundred and thirty-five; and to that business shall we immediately refer.

It was, then, upon that day, in the reign of the good King Louis-Philippe, that, about two o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Samuel Weller was busily employed in brushing the last remaining specks of dust or lint from the new coat which Mr. Nathaniel Winkle had that morning endorsed. Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman were absent upon some monetary affairs of their own; and Mr. Winkle, recollecting that he owed Mr. Scuttle's fair niece a call, was determined to seize that opportunity of acquitting himself of the agreeable debt.

"I don't think my boots are so well blacked as usual, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, glancing towards that portion of his dress.

"An' yet the blackin' 's good enough," answered Mr. Weller; "Varren's can't do no more; an' I'm sure I scrubbed avay till I thought my arms vould ha' fell off."

"They charge two *sous* to Frenchmen and four to the English for blacking your boots in the streets," observed Mr. Winkle; "and that is too much by one half."

"Vell, it is raythier too dear," coincided Mr. Weller; "but, then, think o' the science, as the hair-dresser said ven his customer complained that he charged too much."

"You are right, Sam," exclaimed Mr. Winkle, approvingly. "Have you done?"

"Brown, Sir—vich vos the answer given by the cook to the gen'lemen as enquired arter his roast meat," responded Mr. Weller, as he surveyed Mr. Winkle from head to foot with an air of peculiar satisfaction.

Mr. Winkle accordingly settled his hat gracefully on his head, gave his hair a parting twist with his finger and thumb, and sallied forth with a smiling countenance and a new suit of clothes. It is impossible to say what thoughts occupied his mind as he strolled up the Boulevards; suffice it to say, that in the course of a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, he turned into the Rue Taitbout, and in fifty seconds more found himself ascending the staircase that led to the apartments occupied by Mrs. Weston. By some accident, probably caused by that pre-occupation which so often seizes upon great men, Mr. Winkle mounted to the third storey instead of stopping at the second, and commenced a harmonious peal at the front-door bell without perceiving his mistake. A neatly dressed servant girl shortly made her appearance, and induced Mr. Winkle, by means of a word and a winning smile, to walk into the antechamber, while she hastened to inform her mistress of his arrival. With this request, which was proffered in tolerably good English, he immediately complied; and in a few minutes the girl returned to conduct him to the presence of the presiding genius of the place.

Mr. Winkle traversed the dining-room, and fancied that an alteration in the furniture, or the arrangement of it, had taken place, since his last visit. He passed through the drawing-room, and began to suspect that there was some mistake; and when he was shown into a little *boudoir* at the end of the *suite*, all doubt yielded to conviction of error. But he had gone too far to retreat; especially as, reclining upon a sofa near the fire, and dressed in the most bewitching *deshabiller* he had ever beheld, a lovely female form speedily encountered his astonished glance. The countenance, which was not that of Mrs. Weston, was fascinating in the extreme; and the dark eyes, the vermilion lips, the pearly teeth, and the glossy hair were equally beautiful; add to which a fine and glowing bust, and the reader will agree that these were charms which could not fail to attract the attention of a devoted admirer of the fair sex.

"Madam—I beg pardon—really I am quite confused," began Mr. Winkle; and so indeed he was, if the young lady might judge by the blushes that suffused his cheeks.

"Pray take seat, Sare," said the young lady in broken English, but in a most mellifluous tone of voice; "pray take seat—me glad that one accident procure me pleasure of your visit."

There was no possibility of resisting this invitation; Mr. Winkle accordingly suffered himself to glide into a chair and his tongue into a compliment at the same time.

"The fact is," said Mr. Winkle, "that I intended to call upon a Mrs. Weston, who resides—or used to reside in—this house—"

"Ah!" interrupted the young lady; "one Ingliswoman who live underneath—*au second*—I know her by de sight vary well."

"I am however delighted that an accident should have procured me the pleasure of your acquaintance," continued Mr. Winkle, his imagination for the moment rebelling against the absent Arabella; and he proceeded to relate how he had been about four months and a half in Paris, how he liked the French capital much better than the English one, and how he was living with two friends in the Rue Royale Saint-Honoré.

"And what your name, Sare?" enquired the young lady, who had listened attentively to all that Mr. Winkle had related to her.

"Nathaniel Winkle, at your service," was the courteous reply; "and my friends' names are Mr. Samuel Pickwick and Mr. Tracy Tupman."

"Ah!" exclaimed the young lady with a most bewitching smile —"me hear your names before—you vary great men—Pickwick very *extraordinaire* man, me understand."

"We *have* made some noise in the world," said Mr. Winkle, again modestly blushing up to the eyes; "but without the guidance of our great leader Pickwick, we might all have remained in obscurity up to the present moment."

"You then are happy; you vary—vary happy," exclaimed the young lady with an ill-suppressed sigh. "Ah! me not do otherwise than envy your lot!"

"What! are not you happy also?" cried Mr. Winkle, glancing hastily round the richly-furnished *boudoir;* "it appears that you have every thing to conduce to your comfort—every luxury a moderate mind can wish for."

The young lady gazed on Mr. Winkle for a few moments; and the excellent-hearted Pickwickian was grieved at the melancholy which had suddenly overspread her beautiful countenance.

"Do you believe in love at de first sight?" enquired the young lady in an almost inaudible voice, and after a long pause.

Mr. Winkle knew not how to reply, and in trying to look remarkably wise, fell into the extreme, and looked as remarkably foolish.

"But never mind," continued the young lady, her countenance brightening up as suddenly as it had been cast down; "me not intrude my griefs upon others—my breast only must contain them. When vary young, me espouse old man—old enough to be my fader; me only sixteen then—and me not love old man whom parents force me to marry. He try and win my love—he not succeed—he drown himself in despair!"

"God bless me!" ejaculated Mr. Winkle, starting on his chair.

"Yes, he drown himself—he tumble from bridge into de Seine," continued the young lady, relapsing into a sentimental tone and manner, "and leave me at one-and-twenty without protection—a widow, Sare."

"Distressing!" said Mr. Winkle, wiping away a couple of tears from his eyes.

"Ah! that not all," resumed the young lady in the same lachrymose style; "me ruined—me lose all—and me dependent on one old cousin who persecute me to give him my hand."

"Heavens! are the young, and the beautiful, and the unprotected thus to meet with monsters instead of champions in the individuals to whom they fly for refuge?" ejaculated Mr. Winkle, his indignation getting the better of his patience; "are honour and disinterested feelings to be exterminated from the face of the earth?"

It is certain that this pathetic appeal to the azure canopy above produced an immediate and deep effect upon the young lady; for she frantically hid her countenance in her pocket-handkerchief, and the motion of her body indicated the emotion of her mind. It is however awkward that, whether in the extremes of bliss or woe, ladies invariably conceal their features in their hands or kerchiefs, thus leaving a spectator uncertain as to whether suppressed laughter or stifled sobs agitate their frames.

"Kind—generous stranger!" said the young lady, suddenly revealing her countenance once more; "how can me repay you for dis sympathy?"

"First," returned Mr. Winkle, "may I request to know whom I have the honour to address?"

"Oh! me forget to tell you my name!" exclaimed the young lady; "me called *Madame Augustine de l'Amour*—my husband was one great banker in Paris—but, at his death, de partners cheat me out of every *sou*."

"And this cousin of your's, Madame del—del—" enquired Mr. Winkle.

"De l'Amour," suggested the young lady. "Oh! my cousin—he old, ugly, disagreeable fellow—he pretend love me—me detest him in return."

"It is very natural so to do," began Mr. Winkle; "and if I were in your place, Madame de l'Amour—"

Mr. Winkle stopped, for the door of the *boudoir* was thrown hastily open, and the servant girl, with a pale face and bewildered air, rushed into the room.

"What de matter now?" demanded the widow in English, in order that Mr. Winkle might understand all that was going on.

"Your cousin, *Madame*, your cousin!" exclaimed the girl, also speaking English, and for the same behoof.

Madame de l'Amour sank almost insensible upon the sofa—a step was heard in the adjoining room—the case was desperate, so was the lady's maid—and, before he had time to collect the ideas which the arrival of the jealous cousin had entirely scattered and disseminated on every side, Mr. Winkle was hastily thrust into an adjoining closet, and almost into a foul clothes' bag simultaneously, by the prudent domestic. No sooner was he safely ensconced in his place of concealment, from which he could see into the *boudoir* through a small window covered with a gauze blind, than the cousin walked into the room, and hastened to seat himself by the side of Madame de l'Amour.

But, to the astonishment of Mr. Winkle, the cousin, instead of being old, ugly, and disagreeable, was young, handsome, and apparently very agreeable, if Mr. Winkle might be allowed to judge by the tender smiles and glances with which he was received by the beautiful widow. The conversation that ensued was carried on in French; and thus

Mr. Winkle was prevented from ascertaining if Madame de l'Amour expressed in words the disgust she contrived so admirably well to conceal by her behaviour.

A copious *dejeûner à la fourchette* was presently arranged upon the table; and while he did ample justice to the succulent viands, the amorous cousin drank a couple of bottles of Claret, with no other assistance than that of a pint of Madeira to settle them upon his stomach. To be brief, which is more than the visit was—after a stay of two hours, he rose to depart, to the inexpressible delight of Mr. Winkle, whose presence of mind had nearly succumbed to the feelings of unmitigated disgust and the unsavoury odour of the foul clothes that oppressed him.

At length, when the young gentleman was gone, and Mr. Winkle's fright nearly so, the cupboard door was unbolted, and a perfect encyclopædia of apologies expressed the sorrow which filled the bosom of Madame de l'Amour on account of the unpleasant predicament in which her visitor had been detained.

"But my cousin is so vary jealous," said the fair widow, resuming her seat upon the sofa, having thrust Mr. Winkle into his own, "that me not dare offend him—not for all de world."

"I thought you said he was old," observed Mr. Winkle.

"He seem old to me," replied Madame de l'Amour.

"And ugly," continued Mr. Winkle.

"Oh! he detestable!" cried the lady with great emphasis.

"And disagreeable, too?" added Mr. Winkle.

"Me cannot bear him," was the reply; "but me obliged to appear civil and glad when he come—me find it *necessaire* to play de hypocrite a little."

Mr. Winkle did not attempt to controvert the lady's self-accusation; he however thought her conduct was very prudent and very natural; and, in the universal philanthropy of his heart, he sincerely pitied her forlorn situation. He then proceeded to assure her, that, if it had not been for fear of compromising her own happiness, he most decidedly should have faced out the danger, and even gone to any extremity to which circumstances and the obnoxious cousin might have impelled him. The lady was about to thank her visitor, who suddenly assumed a fierce and warlike aspect, for his kind condescension and Christian forbearance, when the door again opened, and Mr. Winkle gave so sudden a start and uttered so lamentable a moan, that Madame de l'Amour fancied for a moment he was attacked with apoplexy or some dangerous malady. The entrance of the servant girl to clear away the luncheon, however, apparently relieved Mr. Winkle from that which looked uncommonly like trepidation; and the discourse again turned upon the cousin, the imprisonment of Mr. Winkle in the cupboard, and the private circumstances of the young widow.

"You see," said Madame de l'Amour, "me rather bad situated—me dependent entirely on dat cousin of mine—and he only pay my bills—he give me not one obole of ready money. If me had ready money, me commence law-process against my husband's partners, and me recover my rights."

"And how much should you claim?" enquired Mr. Winkle, think-

ing at the same time that he had never seen so lovely a person in *deshabiller* before.

"Three millions of francs—dat make—let me see how much?" said the widow, counting with her fingers: "dat make one hundred and twenty tousand pounds sterling."

"What is the amount you require, Madam, to commence the law-suit?" proceeded Mr. Winkle.

"About five tousand francs," was the reply, accompanied by a glance that called a smile to Mr. Winkle's lip, and a blush to Mr. Winkle's cheek.

"Singular," said that gentleman, musing audibly; "this is precisely the sum I have left in my name at Rothschild's. I could very well spare it for a month or so."

"Me not want it for more than one fortnight," suggested Madame de l'Amour.

Mr. Winkle thought that he might as well lay the foundation of a Platonic attachment with a young and beautiful woman, by the advance of a loan which would make her rich and independent for life; and, with that promptitude which so eminently characterized his own actions and those of his illustrious companions in travel, he ventured to observe that he could accommodate Madame de l'Amour with a couple of hundred pounds for a period something less than a month, and that he would procure her the sum on the following morning. At first the offer was declined altogether—then, when Mr. Winkle had relinquished the subject, it was again introduced by the lady herself—and eventually the loan was accepted with a multitude of thanks and a host of blushes. Mr. Winkle then took his leave, having promised to partake of a *dejeûner à la fourchette* alone with Madame de l'Amour at two precisely on the ensuing day, and having been strictly enjoined by that lady not to mention his acquaintance with her to a soul—not even to his friends—for fear it should reach the ears of her jealous cousin.

But as Mr. Winkle walked homewards, he began to reflect that he had done wrong in promising to assist a female who might possibly estrange his heart from the wife of his best and purest affections. Although it has been attempted to prove that the wife is of less value than the husband, inasmuch as it has been stated that the latter is the *sovereign*-lord while the former is but a *crown* of glory, we are of opinion that the female is by far the more valuable of the two; and we sincerely hope that it was no other idea which impelled Mr. Winkle to act as he did on his return home. Taking advantage of the half-hour before dinner when Mr. Pickwick was washing his hands in his bed-chamber, Mr. Winkle beckoned Mr. Tupman to follow him into his own room; and there, having cautiously closed the door, he thus addressed his friend:—

"My dear Tupman, I have this morning met with a most extraordinary adventure. Accident has made me acquainted with the most beautiful creature in exstence."

"Ah!" said Mr. Tupman, his face expanding like a sun-flower.

"Yes—" continued Mr. Winkle; "and do you know that for a moment—I may say for an hour—my thoughts have rebelled against poor Bella. It is for this that I have addressed myself to you—to

make you my confidant—and to put you in the way of serving the loveliest of her sex."

Mr. Winkle then succinctly related that which the reader is already acquainted with, save and except the imprisonment in the closet, and the visit of the cousin in *propriâ personâ*. Mr. Tupman was in perfect raptures—he applauded Mr. Winkle's conduct in high terms—and offered to advance the half of the loan himself.

"This is worthy of you, Tupman!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, forgetting that his own hand was covered with soap as he grasped that of his friend with unfeigned delight; "this is worthy of the next in renown to our great leader! To you, Tupman, be allotted the glorious task of presenting the proffered loan to an injured—a virtuous—an amiable woman; and may you receive the thanks which she will express, and the satisfactory reward which your own conscience will not fail to make your's!"

If ever Nathaniel Winkle and Tracy Tupman might have been taken for beings of another world, it was at this moment, had a third person chanced to witness the impressive scene we have but imperfectly described. Tears stood in the eyes of those great men, as they gazed upon each other, and pondered on the charitable action they were about to perform; nor would the illusion have been dissipated by the fact that the face of the former was besmeared with the soap he had as yet forgotten to wipe away from his expressive countenance.

"And is she so very beautiful?" enquired Mr. Tupman, after a long pause.

"Angelic," was the reply.

"What is she like?" was the next and very natural query.

"A seraph," was the highly satisfactory answer.

"And her manners?" persisted Mr. Tupman.

"Like a dove's," explained Mr. Winkle in an equally lucid manner.

"Has she a good voice?"

"Celestial—heavenly!"

"Her figure?"

"Perfect."

"Her eyes?"

"Faultless."

"Her features?"

"Divine."

"Her age?"

"Oh! I really never thought of her age!"

And it was no matter that Mr. Winkle had not; for his picture was already so well drawn, so clear, and so complete, that if the vision of the fair lady were not present to Mr. Tupman's mind's eye, it was certainly not his friend's fault. It is, however, very satisfactorily ascertained that Mr. Tupman's curiosity was excited to a most painful extent, and that he anxiously awaited the arrival of the happy moment when he might introduce himself and the two hundred pounds to the notice of Madame de l'Amour.

"Dinner 's nearly ready, gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller, as he walked gently into the room where Messieurs Tupman and Winkle had held the above discourse; "an' ve mustn't keep the governor a-vaitin';

that'll never do, as the creditor said to the insolwent vich offered a penny in the pound."

"We are quite ready ourselves, Sam," said Mr. Tupman.

"Bin to see a he-lection to-day, Sir," continued Mr. Weller, "an' wery fair the principles seems to be. There's no public wotin' as in England; it's all by ballot, as they calls it; conseqvently there ain't no room for bribery, nor cor-ruption, nor gammon, as von candidit don't know vich vay a constityent's a-goin' for to wote. It appears that von depitty for Paris resigned—and so they vos obleeged to he-lect another; an' a wery pretty sight it where too, as the nobleman said ven he see the set-to betwixt the Billin'sgit fishvimen."

"Was it indeed?" said Mr. Tupman, abstractedly.

"I rayther think so," returned Sam with a knowing shake of the head; "but the more I sees, the more I becomes convicted that the English is a d——d sight too proud to borrow anything vich is good in another country. Vy, Sir, there ain't no chancery-court in France, and no vay of ruinin' poor devils by keepin' off trials from year to vear, till patience and pocket is both veared out. Blest if I don't think I'll write a book myself about them matters, ven ve returns to England; I'm sure it 'ud sell as vell as some o'them silly things vich silly vimen go and scribble about nations vith vich they is a little wexed."

"Precisely so," coincided Mr. Winkle; "but you will have some difficulty, Sam, to make the English believe that foreign institutions are better than their own."

"Vell, Sir," responded Mr. Weller, with a most mysterious shake of the head, "I've heerd say that the French army is the best disciplined in the vorld, and they don't flog the sogers in France, Sir. Vot does that 'ere prove? Vy, that some o' our abuses at home vant rectifyin', as the husband said to his vife ven he gived her the black eye.—But I hear the governor a-askin' if the dinner ain't ready—so look alive, gen'lemen."

The dinner was duly served up to the three gentlemen, and as speedily served round to each, a never-failing appetite and Mr. Weller being in attendance. But scarcely was the soup removed from the table, and its place supplied by a fine piece of Rouen salmon—scarcely had the last drop of a glass of Burgundy's choicest nectar trembled upon the lip of Mr. Pickwick—and scarcely had Mr. Tupman poured *ditto* into his glass, and *ditto* repeated down his throat, when a tremendous peal at the front door bell announced the arrival of some impatient guest. Mr. Winkle started and turned deadly pale—Mr. Tupman played with his watch-chain—and Mr. Pickwick with his knife and fork; but the suspense of the three was not of long duration; and their doubts were speedily removed by the appearance of two individuals in whom it was not difficult to recognise Mr. Lipman and Mr. Jopling, although the former had eschewed for the moment his large wooden pipe, and the latter had declined farther partnership with his old and staunch friend, the faded silk dressing-gown.

"How are you, my boys?" exclaimed Mr. Lipman, shaking hands with the Pickwickians one after another; "pretty tidy, eh?"

"Doesn't Pickwick look lusty, though?" cried Mr. Jopling, appealing to his friend, and indicating the great man by a facetious poke in

the ribs. "But don't let us disturb you at dinner," considerately added the late inmate of Ste. Pelagie.

"Thank you," said Mr. Pickwick, resuming his seat; "we shan't stand upon any ceremony with you. But perhaps you would join us?"

Perhaps they would, indeed; especially as, having vainly sought a dinner elsewhere, these two highly respectable but lately persecuted gentlemen had sought Mr. Pickwick's abode with the firm intention of satisfying the cravings of nature in this respect. They accordingly seated themselves at the table; and while, with becoming decorum, they averred that they had already dined, and would only just "pick a bit" for the sake of society and doing as the others did, they speedily caused the Rouen salmon to disappear from the dish, even to the very tail which Mr. Pickwick had intended to have pickled for next day's luncheon.

"Well, I don't think we've done badly with that, Jopling," observed Mr. Lipman, pushing away his plate; "do you?"

Mr. Jopling declared that he did not, and Mr. Pickwick was of the same opinion, as, indeed, were also Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle; and this unanimity of sentiment may be considered as singularly corroborative of the truth of Mr. Lipman's assertion.

"I am glad to perceive that you have left your late abode, gentlemen," said Mr. Pickwick, after a pause, during which Mr. Jopling had filled and emptied his glass three times.

"Well, it isn't amiss, old chap," respectfully observed Mr. Lipman to the venerated traveller. "Jopling's father came down with the rhino—"

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick complacently; "I see—he sold an estate situate upon that river. Did it fetch much?"

Mr. Lipman merely replied by an allusion to a gentleman of the name of Cheeks, and to another whose patronymic seemed to be Hookey; while Mr. Jopling achieved a long and undisturbed stare at Mr. Pickwick. The two visitors then precipitated themselves, with the avidity that might be expected from a party of gentlemen just arrived from the islands of the Pacific Ocean, upon the course which Mr. Weller and a large tray introduced at this crisis, and the conversation was only resumed at short intervals, by way of relieving the monotonous, but evidently agreeable, operation of eating.

The remaining portion of the dinner was produced and done justice to in the same manner; and with the dessert came punch and cigars, the discussion of which put Mr. Lipman into so exquisite a humour, that he insisted upon singing a very genteel song which he had learnt from a house-breaker with whom he had once been incarcerated in a watch-house in London. So, without waiting for assent or dissent, he forthwith began the following pathetic air for the benefit and instruction of the astonished Mr. Pickwick and that gentleman's friends.

THE HOUSE-BREAKER'S SONG.

I ne'er was a nose, (1) for the reglars (2) came
Whenever a pannie (3) was done:—
Oh! who would chirp (4) to dishonour his name,

(1) One who betrays his companions.
(2) Share of the plunder.
(3) Burglary.
(4) Inform.

And betray his pals (5) in a nibsome (6) mage
To the traps? (7)—Not I for one!
Let nobs in the fur-trade (8) hold their jaw,
And let the jug (9) be free;—
Let Davy's-dust (10) and a well-fak'd claw (11)
For fancy coves be the only law,
And a double-tongued squib (12) to keep in awe
The chaps that flout at me!

From morn to night we'll booze a ken, (13)
And we'll pass the bingo (14) round;
At dusk we'll make our lucky, (15) and then,
With our nags so flash, and our merry-men,
We'll scour the lonely ground.
And if the swells resist our "Stand!"
We'll squib (16) without a joke;
For I'm snigger'd if we will be trepann'd
By the blarneying jaw of a knowing hand,
And thus be lagg'd (17) to a foreign land,
Or die by an artichoke. (18)

But should the traps be on the sly,
For a change we'll have a crack; (19)
The richest cribs (20) shall our wants supply—
Or we'll knap (21) a fogle (22) with fingers fly, (23)
When the swell one turns his back.
The flimsies we can smash (24) as well,
Or a ticker (25) deftly prig;—
But if ever a pal in limbo fell,
He'd sooner be scragg'd (26) at once than tell;
Though the hum-box patterer (27) talk'd of hell,
And the beak (28) wore his nuttiest (29) wig!

When Mr. Lipman had brought this truly erudite specimen of the beauties of his mother tongue to a conclusion, Mr. Jopling was most vehement in his plaudits, Mr. Pickwick most soundly asleep, and Messieurs Tupman and Winkle in a most interesting state of uncertainty as to whether the words they had just heard were Hebrew or Chinese. They accordingly joined Mr. Jopling in his occupation of striking the table with his clenched fist; and, during the remainder of the evening, the whole party preserved so excellent an understanding with each other, that when Messieurs Lipman and Jopling rose to depart, they kindly expressed their intention of visiting their courteous hosts again as speedily as possible.

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(5) Companions.
(6) Gentlemanly.
(7) Police officers.
(8) Old Bailey pleaders.
(9) Prison.
(10) Gunpowder.
(11) An experienced hand at stealing.
(12) Double-barrelled gun.
(13) Drink freely.
(14) Brandy.
(15) Depart.
(16) Fire.
(17) Transported.
(18) A hearty choke; i. e. *hanging*.
(19) A Burglary.
(20) Houses.
(21) Steal.
(22) Handkerchief.
(23) Skilful.
(24) Pass false notes.
(25) Watch.
(26) Hanged.
(27) Parson.
(28) Magistrate or judge.
(29) Handsomest.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A SINGULAR CONVERSATION THAT TAKES PLACE IN A PASTRY-COOK'S SHOP.—MR. TUPMAN'S RECEPTION AT THE ABODE OF MADAME DE L' AMOUR.—THE ARRIVAL OF AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.—MR. WINKLE INTERRUPTS AN AGREEABLE DISCOURSE.—MR. WELLER'S ANECDOTE.

It is an important fact ascertained by geographers and topographers in general, that the Rue de Luxembourg is bounded on the north by the Rue St. Honoré, on the south by the Rue de Rivoli, on the east by one side of itself, and on the west by the Church of St. Hyacinth or the Assumption. Travellers, endowed with a Belzonian spirit of research, will also inform us that in the middle of the aforesaid eastern boundary of the equally aforesaid street, there exists a pastry-cook's shop of inviting and pleasing appearance; and the editor of these Memoirs can bear testimony to its being tenanted by people who speak very good English, and who keep a certain select assortment of waiters and oyster-patties.

On the occasion, to which our history has immediate reference, the two English shop-boys were lounging at the tastefully arranged counter, about half an hour after mid-day on the second of April, 1835, dipping their fingers into the preserves and raspberry-tarts, when their mistress, who was seated in an inner parlour, did not see them, and discussing with serious faces divers important matters when she did. Their conversation appeared to be compounded of certain agreeable figures of speech more or less connected with their professional engagements; and as the emblematic synonyms, by which they characterized the various customers who frequented the shop, may prove to be of considerable importance to the fraternity in general, inasmuch as they may enable pastry-venders to designate their patrons the more easily through the medium of those gentlemen's tastes, we have here carefully reproduced the same.

"Well, I never should ha' thought it, Bill," observed the pastry-cook's elder apprentice; "but if I did n't see the sassage-roll a-dancin' away last night at Musard's, and like bricks too, I'm no gen'leman."

"How very odd," responded Mr. William; "for I myself seed the weal pie a-smokin' his pipe at the Café Turc like a good 'un. Blest if he did n't blow a cloud just like a steam-hingin o' height and forty 'orse power.. Vonderful! vonderful!"

"The spiced cake gived me a bender for myself yesterday arternoon," continued the first gentleman, who, if he had ever so good a coat of arms, had but very bad arms to his coat; "an' very handsome it where too, seeing that I let the ginger-beer cork jump into his eye on purpose a few days ago."

"The devil he did! But I suppose missus took half as usual," said he with the *prænomen* of Bill.

"Oh! in course," responded the other; "which was just the same trick as she played me when the gingy-bread-nut presented me with the five-franc piece for woppin' the little boy as insulted him at the church-door. But here comes the raspberry-tart—so don't talk to me no more; I can't bear it."

And as Mr. Winkle walked into the shop the two boys began to busy themselves, the one with handing him a chair, and the other with taking it away and bringing it back again, while the Pickwickian commenced a desperate attack upon the luscious compositions to which he owed the appropriate name his present servitors had bestowed upon him.

"Who's them parcels for, Bill?" demanded the younger shop-boy, pointing to several paper envelops, with tolerably solid contents.

"That lady as can't pay her bill," was the reply; "an' missus says if so be she don't give the money, the goods isn't to be left. Lor! you know who she is!" added the boy in a tone somewhat above a whisper; "don't you recollect that ere 'ooman as called herself—"

The waiter breathed the name, and the tart fell from Mr. Winkle's hands.

"Oh! aye!" exclaimed William; "and now she passes herself off as—"

The name was once more conveyed in a whisper; but it produced a sudden and violent effect upon Mr. Winkle, if the two boys might judge by the haste in which he threw down a franc and never waited for the change, and then vanished from the shop as speedily as he could.

The fact is that, only a few moments before, Mr. Tupman had parted with Mr. Winkle close by the Madeleine, and the latter returned upon his steps to imbibe a small lunch at the shop of the pastry-cook aforesaid, while the former hastened to Madame de l' Amour's abode in the Rue Taitbout. This he had no difficulty in finding, as the *suite* of apartments, inhabited by that lady, was immediately over the one occupied by Mrs. Weston. So Mr. Tupman's heart palpitated violently against a well-stored pocket-book, as he was ushered into the identical drawing-room through which Mr. Winkle had passed the day before.

Now it appears, that Madame de l' Amour had desired her servant to show Mr. Winkle straight into the sacred *boudoir* so soon as he should make his appearance, and to bid any other less welcome guest to cool himself in the reception-room, until such time as it might suit the convenience of the presiding Goddess of the region to enlighten him with her smiles. The servant, having thus obeyed her mistress's orders in respect to Mr. Tupman, hastened to inform that lady of his august presence, whereupon the following dialogue must be supposed to have occurred in the native tongue of those highly respectable females.

"What sort of a person is he?" enquired Madame de l' Amour.

"Not very much unlike the Marquis, Madam," was the reply.

"In person then he resembles—" continued Madame de l' Amour.

"The Count, in many respects," added the lady's-maid.

"Ah! he is short and stout?" observed the beautiful widow.

"Just for all the world like the German Baron, Madam," was the answer.

"Well-dressed?" was the next question suggetesd by the very natural and truly high-bred curiosity of the fair lady.

"One would think he had borrowed a suit of clothes of the Belgian Consul," returned the domestic, as she arranged her cap in the looking-glass. "The nasty fellow! he tumbled all my head-dress for me!"

"And what is his name?" at length enquired Madame de l' Amour.

"Ah! that I forgot to ask!" exclaimed the lady's maid; and in a moment she had disappeared, in another obtained the required information at the risk of having her cap tumbled a second time, and in a third was again in the presence of her mistress. French chambermaids, if they think and act like Venus, are certainly Sylphide in their motions; and the principal noise they make is with their tongues. Otherwise they glide over polished oaken floors, and meander their way amongst chairs and tables, as gently as fairies or spirits walking on the banks of the Serpentine.

"Well? what is it?" demanded Madame de l' Amour.

The lady's-maid pronounced the magic name of Tupman.

"What?" cried Madame de l' Amour, with an incredulous frown.

The lady's-maid repeated the undying patronymic; and her mistress fell back upon the divan or sofa on which she was seated, while the terrified servant thought she had fallen into a fit. So indeed she had —and a very long and obstinate one it was too; but being a fit of laughter, no doubts were entertained as to an eventual recovery. This the lady's-maid perceived; so she indulged in a respectful giggle, while Madame de l' Amour gave unbridled vent to her risibility.

At the termination of about ten minutes, during which the fit lasted, Madame de l' Amour condescended to recover from her paroxysm, and addressed her maid as follows:—

"You will go into the drawing-room, and say that I am so particularly unwell it is impossible I can receive any one this morning. But enquire the nature of his business, and take care to make him wait till you have had time to acquaint me with it."

The lady's-maid, who had left off laughing precisely one second after her mistress, hastened to obey these orders; whereupon the ensuing agreeable conversation took place between herself and Mr. Tupman.

"Please you, sare, Madame de l' Amour so ill, she not able to see soul: she got in her legs—how you say dat?"

"The gout, I suppose," suggested Mr. Tupman mildly.

"Oh! no—no," cried the lady's-maid with an arch smile, and tapping Mr. Tupman's arm with her fingers: "me mean de *rheumatique*, you know."

"Ah! the rheumatism—I see," exclaimed Mr. Tupman, making a motion as if he intended to kiss the young female with the pouting red lips.

"Dat what it is," cried the said young lady: "but you tell me your business—and me tell in return all you say to *Madame*."

"The fact is," began Mr. Tupman, screwing his mouth up into a contortion that was intended to express admiration of his companion's charms, but which in point of telegraphic accuracy was a total failure; "your mistress told Mr. Winkle—a friend of mine—yesterday afternoon, that she was somewhat in want of a trifling advance for the purpose of—"

"Ah! de lawsuit!" cried the lady's-maid, with an ill-suppressed smile.

"Exactly," returned Mr. Tupman, with a forced one: "and my friend Winkle has desired me to call and leave the required sum."

At this crisis the front-door bell rang violently, and the young lady

requested Mr. Tupman's patience for one moment, while she ran to answer the sonorous appeal.

"Mistress at home?" demanded a loud voice, the tones of which were not entirely unfamiliar to Mr. Tupman's ear.

"Yes—but engaged," was the abrupt reply tendered by the lady's-maid.

"That be d——d!" emphatically exclaimed the visitor. "So take 're, and let me pass."

"Impossible!" expostulated the domestic.

"It is, is it?" coolly observed the other. "Now, I tell you what it is, my young hair-brushing, bed-warming, sugar-tongued heroine of the curling-tongues and scent-bottle—if you were a man, I'd serve you as the thirteen Jews did Mr. Jemmy Mokhoff, the Siberian youth: but as you are only a helpless female, I'll just walk by without injuring you, as my friend Twankay, the Great Cham, used to say;"—and with these words, the unceremonius gentleman strode coolly into the drawing-room, and disclosed to the wondering eyes of Mr. Tupman the form and face of Mr. Adolphus Crashem.

"Tupman, how are you?" cried that gentleman, when he had recovered from the momentary surprise into which this unexpected encounter had thrown him.

Mr. Tupman coldly replied that he was in a state of peculiar salubriousness.

"Made it up, I suppose, eh?" observed Mr. Crashem, with a knowing wink.

"What?" said Mr. Tupman, inquiringly.

"Oh! I see—" cried Mr. Crashem, correcting himself. "Come upon the same errand as myself, eh? old fellow. Well—I shan't interfere with you, if you like to take them first. *Galignani* says in the advertising sheet of this morning, 'Nice airy drawing-room, healthy dining-parlour, and a cheerful bed-chamber. No children nor dogs allowed.' So if you really wish—"

"Upon my word, Mr. Crashem," said Mr. Tupman, somewhat indignant at being saluted as an ancient fellow by the individual with whom he had no reason to be well pleased; "I did not come to look after lodgings, but to bring a sum of money to a lady whom my friend Winkle became acquainted with yesterday."

"And whom you have not yet seen?" eagerly demanded Mr. Crashem.

"No," replied Mr. Tupman, fondly anticipating that the frankness of the explanation might induce Mr. Crashem to be equally communicative relative to his own extraordinary intrusion.

"Just my business, also!" exclaimed that gentleman, considerably enlightened.

"I fancied," suggested Mr. Tupman, "that you came to look for lodgings which you had seen advertised—"

"Delicacy—my dear fellow—delicacy," interrupted Mr. Adolphus Crashem, looking very much like a man who invariably acted upon the same principle: "delicacy in a case where there's a female concerned, you know—as my friend, the baronet, used to say. And to tell you the truth," he added in a whisper, "I am myself come to assist the worthy lady herself in her temporary difficulties. She is an excellent

creature, and now, thank God! a few hundreds won't hurt me: "—and with these words, Mr. Crashem chased a solitary five-franc piece into the most profound corner of his breeches' pocket.

"Ah! now I understand you," cried Mr. Tupman, considerably relieved by this explanation: "we are both come then upon the same charitable motive. But—how long have you been in Paris?"

"Only a few days," replied Mr. Crashem. "Since our cursed adventure at St. Omers I have been home to my father, and drawn the old boy. Singular that with his immense wealth, and a General too, he should be eccentric enough to fancy himself a publican, is it not?" enquired the excellent son of Mr. John Sugden.

"Very," responded Mr. Tupman, who was thinking of something else. "But do you know what has become of—of—Anastasie?" added that gentleman in a very low tone of voice.

Mr. Crashem eyed Mr. Tupman askance for one or two minutes, and then solemnly replied, "Anastasie is no more!"

"Dead!" ejaculated Mr. Tupman, starting from his seat.

"Dead—and of a broken heart," continued Mr. Crashem pathetically.

"God bless me!" said Mr. Tupman, musing, and fumbling for his cambric pocket-handkerchief.

"Yes—" said Mr. Adolphus Crashem: "defeated hopes—blighted love—disappointment, *et cetera—et cetera*, carried her to an untimely grave."

Mr. Tupman was preparing to weep in a fit and becoming manner, and Mr. Crashem, with equal discretion, was about to relate a most pathetic and heart-rending account of the last moments of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, when the lady's-maid, who had been a silent and unobserved listener and spectator of all that passed between the two gentlemen, was again summoned to the front door by a ring more clamorous and authoritative than that which had announced Mr. Adolphus Crashem. The door was accordingly opened with befitting haste; and Mr. Winkle, the perspiration running down his face, his hair in disorder, his eyes almost starting out of his head, and his lips still smeared with raspberry-jam, rushed speedily past the astonished domestic, crying out for his "friend Tupman," as lustily as he could bawl. Mr. Tupman rose to ascertain the meaning of this extraordinary clamour; and as he hastened towards the drawing-room door, he encountered Mr. Winkle with a somewhat unpleasant shock, and being thereby tripped lightly off his legs, fell heavily to the ground, to the inexpressible delight of Mr. Crashem, who considerately advised the servant "to pick up the pieces."

"Tupman," exclaimed Mr. Winkle, sinking upon a chair, and panting for breath,—"the money!"

"Oh! my nose!" cried the individual thus appealed to, as he rose slowly from the floor, rubbing his nasal promontory as mercilessly as Mr. St. John Long was accustomed to operate upon his patients' backs.

"The money?" shouted Mr. Winkle, foaming at the mouth: "it's all a humbug!"

"What!" cried Mr. Tupman, partially recovering his presence of mind. "Has any thing happened? Where's Pickwick?"

"Where's the money?" bawled Mr. Winkle louder than before.

"Here—here," replied Mr. Tupman, entertaining a vague notion of

his friend's meaning, and striking his left breast forcibly with his clenched fist, like a lover in a tragedy.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, throwing his hat upon the floor, unbuttoning his waistcoat, and gasping for breath: "I'm not too late, then!"

"How do you do, Winkle?" said Mr. Crashem, nodding familiarly to that gentleman, and exhibiting unequivocal signs of delight at the scene that was being enacted around him. "Have another go at the dice-box, old fellow—eh? Seven's the main, you know—don't be downhearted, as my friend the Great Cham used to say."

"Tupman, my dear fellow," cried Mr. Winkle, having now partially recovered his usual breathing-pace, "we have been most egregiously duped throughout this affair. My Madame de l'Amour is no other than—"

"What?" interrupted Mr. Tupman, whose curiosity was excessive on account of his suspicions being now somewhat excited in a certain quarter.

"Than your Mademoiselle Anastasie," added Mr. Winkle, casting a look of the deepest indignation and another of the most sovereign contempt, admirably well blended, at Mr. Adolphus Crashem, who fell back in his chair, and indulged in a roar of laughter that shook the very casements of the apartment.

Mr. Tupman looked the united libraries of London, Paris, and Vienna, and felt a dozen Lardner's "Cabinet Cyclopædias." To think that only a few moments before he was about to weep for the death of her who at that minute was again indirectly deceiving him!—and then the duplicity of his *quondam* friend, Mr. Adolphus Crashem! The ingenuity of that extraordinary individual, in Mr. Tupman's idea, had elevated a common-place act into a masterly science: he had given to it dignity and grace; his lies had a richness, a persuasive eloquence, a smoothness in them, which rounded off their improbability, as oil often softens down salad, and old port relieves the asperity of the olives. Before he had heard Mr. Crashem, lying was only lying: now it was painting—poetry—drama—music: he was a Correggio for softness of touch, a Rossini for promising sounds, a very Kemble for cajolery! Such were the ruminations of Mr. Tupman, while the subject of them was giving free vent to his mirth, Mr. Winkle was wiping his forehead with a silk pocket-handkerchief, and the lady's-maid was recounting the adventures of the last half-hour to her disappointed mistress, who had already overheard a considerable portion of the proceedings.

Mr. Winkle having now sufficiently recovered his breath, and Mr. Tupman his presence of mind, to make an immediate *exit* from the apartments occupied by the fair deceiver, they rose, and distantly bowing to Mr. Adolphus Crashem, who prudently tarried behind to console the disappointed Anastasie, withdrew, mutually congratulating themselves and each other upon the narrow escape they had experienced, and promising never to indulge their charitable intentions in future without being aware of the real character of the object of their solicitude.

When these eminently sagacious gentlemen had once more returned to their lodgings, they found that their venerated leader was gone for a walk with Mr. Septimus Chitty; they accordingly indulged them-

selves with a glass of *liqueur* and a biscuit, and, in the plenitude of their good humour, did not hesitate to recount their adventures to Mr. Samuel Weller, whose superior wisdom and foresight they had lately learned to prize in no ordinary degree.

"Wery narrow escape it where too," observed Mr. Weller: "and wery much to your credit, gen'lemen, is the whole affair, both vith regard to your ex-perience in the vorld, and the vay you prudently resolves to chuck your money about, seein' that now-a-days people has got a wery con-siderable degree too much o' that 'ere commodity. But you charitable folks must find a object, as the church-varden said ven he adwertised for a nuss to take care o' the basket o' children as vos left at the church-door."

"Charity is one of the most amiable of Christian virtues, Sam," said Mr. Tupman, smacking his lips, immediately after having imbibed a second glass of the curaçoa.

"So it is," coincided Mr. Weller, "ven the charitable von isn't used like the gen'leman in the Park."

"What was that, Sam?" demanded Mr. Winkle, with a patronising smile.

"Gen'leman, Sir," began Mr. Weller, very prudently eschewing all preface and introduction, an example that ought to be more generally imitated by authors and journalists,—"gen'leman vos valkin' near the Serpentine river, von fine arter-noon, vith only a solitary half-crown in his pocket. Credit vos at a low ebb vith him at that period; and as he lounged back'ards and for'ards, he composed a letter in his head to a friend at Ipsvich to en-treat the loan of twenty pounds, and for vich letter he knew he must pay the postige. He looked at his coin—it vos vorth two bob and a tanner—and pursued his melancholy valk. It vos twilight, an' a cold—cuttin'—bleak-lookin' evening it where, too—all nature appearing to say 'No' to him. Nobody vouldn't valk for pleasure on sich a night; so that the gen'leman had *that* side o' the Park at least to his-self. A beggar at length broke in upon his meditations—a lean—long—shufflin', shamblin' feller, vith a sharp all-gylar, half-starved face, the wery hemblim o' misery an' distress. Ven, he steps up to the gen'leman, and entreats him to have compassion upon him—to give him a tanner—a brown—a farden, or any thing. Gen'leman vos deaf—poverty made him hard-hearted. At every vord he uttered, gen'leman clutched his half-crown the more tighter. At length, tired and irritated vith the beggar's himportunities, the gen'leman turns round and says in a awful voice, 'Get along vith ye, my fine feller—I ain't got nothin' to give avay;' vich vos the blessed truth, as you might wery vell suppose. The beggar's countenance and manners fell di-rectly.—'God for-give ye, Sir, for your hard-heartedness, and me too as is driven to that vich I've so long endeavoured to avoid;'—and he runs avay like bricks to the Serpentine. The gen'leman vos then wery much alarmed at vot had happened, and bitterly dep-plored his stinginess in not havin' gived his last half-crown. It vosn't too late—the gen'leman run and catched the beggar on the wery edge o' the stream, and shoves the half-crown into his fist.—'An' now, my fine feller,' says the gen'leman, vith the intention o' preachin' him a wery fine discourse, in vich his own self-denial vouldn't ha' gone for nothin', 'vot vos it you must ha' done, and vich you've so long bin

tryin' to avoid, if I hadn't relieved your wants?'—'Vy, Sir,' replies the beggar-man vith a arch smile, 'I must ha' gone for to vork!'"

Just as Mr. Weller brought his truly instructive anecdote to a conclusion, Mr. Pickwick, accompanied by Mr. Septimus Chitty, returned home. The venerable gentleman was in high glee; a smile of satisfaction illumed his expressive countenance; and Mr. Septimus Chitty himself was radiant with joy, as he consulted the time-piece, or *tempus-pax*, as he classically styled it. It appears that those two illustrious individuals had been pursuing their antiquarian researches in the very heart of the Faubourg St. Germain, and that accident had thrown in their way a most singular Legend connected with the magnificent church of St. Sulpice. Mr. Chitty had not failed to take notes of all the particulars connected with that sacred fane; and when it was suggested by Mr. Pickwick that the Legend had better be a little curtailed, he very properly declared "that in such matters it was necessary to go *totum porcum*—the whole hog." As this argument was supported by a certain kind familiarity, which prompted the poet to designate Mr. Pickwick as a *senex tango*, or an "old touch"—an allegorical method of expressing veneration or friendship, considerably in vogue in high life—he was allowed to have his own way; and in the course of a few hours the Legend was digested to his heart's content. We accordingly take this opportunity of laying the substance of it before our readers.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CHEVALIER.—A LEGEND OF ST. SULPICE.

THE CHEVALIER.—EUGENIE.—THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS.—THE INAUSPICIOUS MARRIAGE, AND THE MYSTERIOUS CONDUCT OF THE YOUNG PRIEST.—SUSPICIONS.—THE CONFESSIONAL-BOX.

The Chevalier de Valmont was a perfect specimen of the aristocracy of the old *regime*. He was about five-and-forty years of age, extremely well-preserved, and scarcely affected by the ravages of time, so far as they regarded his hair and teeth. A wrinkle or two was certainly traced upon his forehead; but as his countenance was generally expanded into smiles, the invidious line was scarcely visible. His full grey eye was bright, and expressive of the most perfect good humour; his complexion slightly florid; his mouth small; his figure rather inclined to *embonpoint;* and his feet and ankles diminutive to a fault. He was composed of compliments, *bons mots*, and bows. His manners were the most polished and fascinating that could be conceived; and although his conversation was chiefly confined to trifles and those *bagatelles* that usually occupy the inmates of a *salon doré*, still was he invariably surrounded by a host of young people of both sexes, who delighted to listen to his discourse, to treasure up his choice sayings for second-hand retail at convenient opportunities, and to obtain an approving smile or a familiar nod from one whose society was more sought after than even that of young noblemen superior to the chevalier in personal attractions, wealth, and rank.

The chevalier was a bachelor at the epoch which marks the commencement of this narrative. He possessed an income of thirty thousand francs a-year, and entertained but slight notions of "committing matrimony." Nevertheless, many young—aye, and beautiful young ladies of the Faubourg St. Germain would have gladly received the addresses of the chevalier, and as freely exchanged their names for that of De Valmont. And who was so worthy of universal esteem as the excellent chevalier? His politeness was proverbial: he had never uttered a word which even envy could torture into rudeness; nor did he suffer his adulation to be mingled with servility, nor his compliments to savour of unmerited flattery. Did an elderly female complain of the ravages that time was making upon her person, he would assure her that wisdom and experience were far preferable to mere outward attractions; and when any young lady was neglected in a ball-room on account of her deficiency in that "skin-deep beauty," the chevalier hastened to her side, praised her wit and her accomplishments, and, ere he left her, managed to persuade the re-assured *demoiselle* that steady and sedate people were invariably sought in marriage by those who regarded that solemn ceremony as the beacon to domestic peace. Thus was the chevalier a general favourite with the fair sex; and his exquisite taste in the art of dress was avowedly imitated by all young men of fashion. Who, then, could have been more sought after than De Valmont?

Such was the ascendancy gained and maintained by the courtly chevalier over the *haut ton* of the most fashionable quarter of Paris. And let it not be imagined that he was unaware of his importance in the brilliant circles of birth, beauty, and rank. He had a pride in subjecting all his acquaintances to the acknowledgment, tacit though it were, of his superior taste, discernment, and manners. He looked upon the sphere of the Faubourg St. Germain as a litte empire over which he conventionally reigned; and most jealous was he of any rival who essayed the dangerous and invariably vain attempt to outshine him. Fruitless was the endeavour of any ambitious youth to introduce a new method of tying the neckcloth, to give popularity to a new pattern for a waistcoat, or to bring into vogue a new dance or song, if the chevalier's approbation had not been first sought and gained. A very Brummell in this respect—in others far superior to the English dandy—was the elegant and polished De Valmont. Alas! such specimens of gentility and refinement have now ceased to exist. The Revolution of 1830, in extending the liberties of France, has formed a *bourgeoisie* whose will is the government of the country, whose name daily becomes more respectable, and whose numerical force is rapidly increasing. To that body, which the Chevalier de Valmont ten or twelve years ago would have treated as something little better than *canaille*, the first Frenchman in the land is to-day delighted to connect himself by marriage or commercial alliance. Such is the influence enjoyed by the monarchy of the middle classes.

One morning the chevalier sallied forth at an unusually early hour, and it was easy to perceive that he had expended less time on his toilet than was ordinarily his custom.

"Whither in such haste?" enquired the Vicomte d'Armanelle, as

he encountered the chevalier at the corner formed by the Rue de l'Université and the Rue des Beaux Arts.

"A letter—my dear friend—a letter of some importance," was the reply. "Indeed, M. le Vicomte—a letter that has afforded me considerable pleasure. You recollect my ancient school companion, Alfred de Lamoreau?"

"Perfectly."

"He is to arrive in Paris this very day—he and his amiable family. I am about to seek a lodging for their reception and temporary abode, until they shall be able to suit themselves. A bachelor, my dear friend, is but an ill caterer for domestic comforts; but I must do my best, as I usually say in such cases."

"*Au plaisir, chevalier*," cried the Vicomte; "send me Lamoreau's address in a day or two, and I will make a point of calling. *Adieu.*

"*Adieu!*" re-echoed the chevalier with his usual half-familiar—half-distantly courteous bow; and he pursued his way along the Rue de l'Université, in which street he was more likely to procure ready-furnished apartments than in any other on that side of the water.

So soon as the chevalier had accomplished the object of his search, he returned to his hotel in the Rue de Lille, and gave orders to Lafleur, his favourite valet, not to admit any one save the Count de Lamoreau, who was expected every moment. An hour passed away, and at the expiration of that period the *claque* of the postilion's whip was heard in the street. The chevalier hastened to a window that afforded a view of the principal entrance of the hotel, just as a post-chaise, drawn by four horses, and covered with dust, galloped into the court-yard. Not all the treasures of the universe—nor all the ties of ancient friendship—would have compelled the chevalier to descend and assist M. de Lamoreau and his family to alight from their carriage; but when they were shown into the apartment, where he awaited their arrival, he received them with a cordiality that evinced his satisfaction and joy.

M. de Lamoreau was a little gentleman of about the same age as the chevalier: his excellent spouse was a talkative, but a lady-like woman; his only son was a young man of proud and haughty demeanour; but the count's niece, Eugenie, was an angel of beauty. The chevalier, for the first time in his life, stood abashed before a lovely female. The colour mounted to his cheeks—his hand trembled—and he could not utter a word to welcome the divine creature that began to partake of his embarrassment. Two moments were, however, sufficient to enable the chevalier to recover his usual equanimity of disposition, and he did the honours of his house with the distinguished politeness and hospitality for which he was justly renowned.

Eugenie was about eighteen. Unacquainted with the gaieties and dissipation of the metropolis, she had passed nearly all her life in a secluded provincial town, and flourished like one of the flowers she had been accustomed to cull in her own garden. Chaste and pure were her thoughts—virgin innocence was in her smile, on her brow, and in her bashful replies. The chevalier, who knew full well how to read the intricacies of the human heart, declared within himself that he had never beheld so celestial a being; and certain vague and undefined

ideas of matrimony arose in his imagination. His pride had been hitherto so eminently flattered by the gay beauties of the metropolis, that he could not for one moment conceive how any opposition was to be experienced in his suit with a young girl fresh from the country, and whose ideas would be shortly bewildered by the splendour, the brilliancy, and the novelty of Parisian fashionable life. These were, however, merely the passing reflections of the moment; but the chevalier wist not at the time how deep was the sudden impression made upon his mind by the charms of the beautiful Eugenie.

In the course of the afternoon the chevalier accompanied M. de Lamoreau to inspect his new lodgings in the Rue de l'Université, and that nobleman expressed himself highly gratified with his friend's choice. No sooner was the family installed in these apartments, than the chevalier became a constant visitor. But it was not merely the regard he entertained for the count, that induced the elegant De Valmont to pass the chief portion of his days in the society of the Lamoreau family. He saw that his mellifluous compliments were generally unheeded—that his opinion was not considered infallible by the apathetic Eugenie—and that, for the first time in his life, his absolute sway in the realms of fashion was tacitly unacknowledged. This conviction made a more powerful impression on the heart of the chevalier than the charms of Eugenie could have ever produced. He felt annoyed—his vanity was offended—his pride was piqued—and he determined to reduce the haughty and rebellious beauty to subjection. This was no easy task. Eugenie's very innocence was the originating cause of her disregard for the chevalier's *bons mots*, elegant compliments, interesting chit-chat, and exquisite taste in all matters of fashionable life. Too little experienced in the mysteries of genteel scandal, private discussion of a neighbour's affairs, or the meanings intended to be imparted by indirect compliment, amorous comparison, and poetic allusion, Eugenie was not at all calculated to be enlisted amongst the number of the chevalier's female worshippers. Hence did that experienced gentleman determine in his own mind to convince De Lamoreau's beautiful niece of his great superiority, and to compel her to value his acquaintance and patronising smile in the *grandes réunions* where they met.

How fatal was this scheme to the happiness of the chevalier! By dint of perseverance in his ambitious speculation, he gradually suffered the personal attractions of Eugenie to entwine adamantine chains around his heart; and while he fondly fancied that he was reducing the country-bred girl to an acknowledgment and comprehension of his merits, he daily drank deeper of those intoxicating draughts which were shortly destined to work upon his imagination and cause him to commit the most egregious of follies.

Hector de Lamoreau was the dangerous rival whom the chevalier had to encounter. Brought up together from infancy, it was not extraordinary if the two cousins entertained a deep and sincere affection for each other. But they concealed it from the eyes of Hector's parents—and still more strictly from the world—well knowing that, however kind and indulgent the count and countess might be towards the dependent Eugenie, they would never permit their only son, the hope of their ancient family, to espouse a pennyless orphan. This

very circumstance only attached the young people the more to each other; and when, after a period of doubt and uncertainty that extended to upwards of eighteen months, the chevalier seriously proposed to Eugenie, the astonished girl, in the embarrassment of the moment, and in accordance with her upright and correct ideas, candidly acknowledged the prior engagement of her affections, an avowal which the chevalier received with no small degree of astonishment, but which he affected to treat as "a mere juvenile predilection, as evanescent as it was misplaced."

This repulse, instead of effectually causing De Valmont to desist from offering his addresses where they could now only assume the air of an unjust persecution, urged him on to more peremptory measures than he had as yet adopted; and in a few days after the memorable conversation he had with Eugenie relative to the state of her affections, he quietly—while they were both seated over a bottle of Chambertin—communicated the whole matter to Count de Lamoreau, who was thunderstruck at the conduct of his son, angry at the duplicity, as he called the silence, of Eugenie, and at the same time, for obvious reasons, delighted at the proposals of the chevalier.

"Chevalier de Valmont," said the count after a considerable pause, during which he deliciously savoured the Chambertin, "Eugenie shall be yours!"

"I flatter myself," began the chevalier, totally unruffled—for, according to his idea, the display of any emotion or ebullition of feeling was at variance with the placid equanimity a gentleman should invariably preserve—totally unruffled by the communication which De Lamoreau had just made, and which so nearly regarded his interests, "I flatter myself that *mademoiselle* might receive less eligible offers, and launch into the sea of matrimony under the control of a more fallible pilot. Not that I would vaunt my own merits; for you, De Lamoreau, being a person of considerable discernment," added the chevalier, introducing, as if unintentionally, one of those flattering compliments which he knew were calculated to place a man on excellent terms with himself—"and having seen too much of the world to be deceived as to the intrinsic value of a friend—you, my dear Lamoreau, can best judge whether Eugenie will be happy when placed under my care."

The count nodded assent, and sipped his wine with the importance of a man to the shrine of whose pride a most grateful incense has just been offered up. Had he deemed it necessary, the chevalier would have supplied him with whole hecatombs of compliments; but the point was gained at a less expensive rate; and, on the following morning, Eugenie was duly informed of the approval her uncle had given to the chevalier's suit, and at the same time was desired to prepare for the nuptial ceremony in the course of a month.

Time rolled onwards; and, while the chevalier was receiving with radiant and triumphant smiles the congratulations of his friends on his approaching marriage, Eugenie pined in secret. Hector de Lamoreau saw her but seldom—private interviews were guarded against by the vigilance of her parents; still the young lovers adored not each other the less, nor did they fail to communicate their hopes, their tenderness, and their fears so often as opportunities occurred. But Eugenie did

not find the same facilities of continuing an epistolary correspondence that Hector enjoyed; and the ingenuity of the lovers, in proportion as the *surveillance* of the count and countess increased in vigilance, became the more fertile. They recollected that in eastern climes inanimate objects were emblematic of certain feelings; and they at length had recourse to one of those symbolic languages—the language of flowers. In the morning Hector sent, by a faithful valet, a leaf of wormwood, expressive of "Grief!" To this Eugenie replied by a daisy—"Your grief is shared by me!" In the afternoon, the unhappy youth despatched a wall-flower, the symbol of "Constancy;" to which was returned a hyacinth—"Your love kills me." Then, when the shades of night were spread over the earth, ere he retired to his sleepless couch, Hector once more expressed his tenderness towards Eugenie by means of no other missive than the rose—and he received in return a slip of sweet basil, importing the "Reminiscences of early love." It is hardly necessary to state that the close confinement in which the suffering girl was detained, and the rigid watchfulness of her cruel guardians, thus obliged the lovers to encourage each other with hope and reciprocal assurances of permanent affection.

In the meantime, the chevalier, proud at his imagined triumph, and delighted at the prospect of so shortly leading a beauteous bride to the altar, made all necessary preparations for the marriage, purchased new furniture, adorned his hotel in a sumptuous manner, and expended incredible sums on an entirely new *toilette*, which he thought would be more suitable to the sobriety of the hymeneal state, than the gay and elegant attire he usually wore.

The appointed morning arrived; the weather was tempestuous and gloomy; and occasional showers of rain precluded the possibility of giving a *fête champêtre* at St. Cloud or Versailles, as the chevalier had at first intended. A train of carriages drew up at an early hour opposite the count's dwelling in the Rue de l'Université; and, when the clock struck eleven, the noble party, consisting of the bride, her uncle and aunt, her unfortunate lover, the chevalier, and a crowd of friends, proceeded to the *Mairie* of the *arrondissement*, where the civil rights were speedily performed in presence of the Mayor and his subordinates. Eugenie's countenance was deadly pale—she seemed scarcely conscious of the nature of the ceremony in which she played so important a part—and Hector, on his side, maintained a moody and desperate silence. The chevalier was all gaiety, and even smiles, in spite of the solemnity of the occasion.

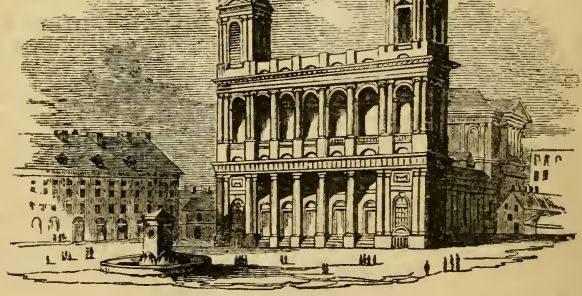
From the *Mairie* the party proceeded to the church of St. Sulpice, where the priests were prepared to sanction, in the name of heaven, a rite already consecrated by man. Eugenie trembled violently when she entered the sacred edifice, at the principal gate of which crowds were collected to witness the chevalier's nuptials; and as she languidly walked up the aisle towards the grand altar-piece, so justly renowned for its beauty, she ventured to cast a momentary glance at Hector. He caught her eye—and hastily pointed to a flower that he had placed conspicuously above the rest in his *bouquet*. Eugenie recognised it but too well—it was a small branch of the eglantine, expressive of 'Unhappy love!"

Eugenie, with a sinking heart, murmured to herself a few words ex-

pressive of the evil omen that this reminiscence portended, and did not again dare to turn her eyes towards Hector during the remainder of the time the bridal party was detained in the church. But Hector's glances wandered around that sacred pile with an apparent indifference he could not feel; he examined the beautiful paintings with a seeming interest totally belying the real state of his mind; and when the loud organ's solemn peals echoed through the church, a sudden fire lit up his eye—he smiled contemptuously as he gazed upon the chevalier—and joined in the sacred anthem with a firm tone.

Amongst the numerous priests, who officiated at the bridal ceremony, was a young man—an intimate friend of Hector—whose eyes were invariably fixed upon the pale countenance of the bride; and once, during the progress of that which the unfortunate girl considered the most painful ordeal through which she had ever yet passed, that young priest took an opportunity of murmuring in her ear, "Perjured! how darest thou appear at the altar of thy God?" Astonishment overcame the excess of any more painful feeling; and Eugenie remained rooted to the spot in motionless apathy during the remainder of the service, those terrible words, of such direful omen, still ringing in her ears.

When the ceremony was concluded, the whole party moved solemnly down the aisle, and as slowly issued from the church beneath that magnificent gate, above which the two tall towers of St. Sulpice rear



their summits to the skies. As she passed under the colonnade, an individual, leaning against one of the pillars, met the eye of the bride; and a dread shudder came over her, as she recognised the young priest. He moved not—but evidently awaited her there. She hesitated—an indescribable feeling of horror seized upon her frame—her aunt perceived her emotions, mistook the cause, and led her onward to the carriage. The priest bowed as she passed by him, and whispered in a tone audible only to her, the word "Perjured!" Eugenie fainted in her aunt's arms—human nature could not support that complication of ominous circumstances and dread accusations—and in a senseless state she was borne back to the count's hotel, where, when she was

partially revived, she related to the countess her attachment to Hector, the vows of constancy she had expressed to him by means of the symbolic flowers, and the ominous words of the young priest. Madame de Lamoreau charged her, as she valued her peace and that of the chevalier, not to breathe to a single soul a sentence relative to those occurrences.

* * * * *

"Impossible! it cannot be—oh! no—it is impossible!" cried the chevalier as he paced his apartment with hurried steps. His cheek was ashy pale—his hair almost stood on end—his dress was in disorder—his left hand was firmly clenched—his right held a small piece of paper in the form of a note or *billet*. "Oh! no—my sight deceives me—my eyes are waxing dim—I have not read rightly—" and he perused the letter for the twentieth time to establish conviction the more deeply in his mind. "Alas! 'tis too true—" he said, contracting his forehead into a thousand wrinkles, and stamping violently on the floor—"it is too true! Eighteen months only of connubial bliss—and then—to lose all—to be degraded—to have my gray hairs sprinkled with the ashes of dishonour! Oh!—misguided thing—thy blood alone can wipe away this stain:"—then suddenly recollecting himself, he added with a bitter smile, "But no—not thine, weak creature—thy paramour shall atone for both your crimes! Frail woman—and thou, basest of men—how I now hate, detest, revile, despise ye both! Avaunt, sad evidences of my dishonour—better were it, perhaps, that I had never seen thee!"—and he tore the letter into a thousand pieces.

Such were the ravings of the chevalier, as he paced his apartment in a state of mind that no pen—no language can describe. His faithful valet Lafleur overheard the whole, and thus unintentionally became the depositor of a secret that menaced the ruin of a noble family's honour. He knew not how to act—what course to pursue. He was afraid his master might lay violent hands upon himself—or destroy the sinful Eugenie in a moment of passion. The embarrassment of the valet was presently increased by the sound of his master's bell, and he hastened to obey the summons, his breast teeming with mingled curiosity and alarm.

"Tell Amelie I wish to speak with her," said the chevalier, affecting a coolness he did not—could not feel.

"My lady's *femme-de-chambre?*" enquired Lafleur.

"Certainly—what other Amelie could I mean, fool?" cried De Valmont, all his subdued anger bursting forth against the poor domestic, who fled as quickly as he could to obey the orders of his master, from whom any ebullition of wrath was as rare as the visits of angels.

"How is your mistress to-day, Amelie?" enquired the chevalier, when the *femme-de-chambre* entered the apartment. This was his usual query in the morning: a variation would have excited some suspicion.

"Monsieur, Madame complains of a partial head-ache at this moment; but as she is presently going to *confesse* at St. Sulpice, the fresh air will probably benefit her."

"Ah! is this Saturday?" exclaimed the chevalier, a sudden idea

flitting across his brain. "At what time does your mistress usually visit the confessional?" he enquired.

"Between two and three o'clock in the afternoon," replied the Abigail; "that being the period at which the Abbé François St. Joseph —her ladyship's almoner—attends the holy ceremony."

"'Tis well!" said the chevalier, thoughtfully; then in a moment, he added, "Amelie, inform your mistress that business of some importance will occupy me at the Bourse during the remainder of the day. I do not even know whether I shall dine at home."

"Your pleasure shall be obeyed," returned the girl, and the chevalier was again alone.

No one ever knew how he contrived to wile away the time—which to him must have appeared interminable—that intervened between the morning and the hour when he hastened to St. Sulpice to put into execution the extraordinary scheme he had planned and determined to adopt. It is, however, believed that he wandered about the least frequented quarters of Paris, and carefully avoided those haunts where he was likely to encounter any of his friends or acquaintances. Precisely as the clock struck two, he posted himself under the colonnade which covers the principal gate of St. Sulpice. A quarter of an hour elapsed ere he perceived the person whose services he required: and the determined appearance of that well-known gentleman, standing, as he was, with folded arms and anxious look at the very door of the sanctuary of the Almighty, did not fail to strike the various individuals who entered the church for the purposes of divine worship. To a few, with whom he was acquainted, he bowed hastily, but exchanged not a word with a soul. At length the Abbé François St. Joseph was seen slowly advancing towards the sacred pile. The chevalier hastened to meet him, and drew him aside to one extremity of the square. A long and vehement conversation ensued. The chevalier appeared to implore—the priest obstinately to refuse. Such was the idea impressed upon the mind of the beadle of the church, who had noticed the singular behaviour of the chevalier, and now watched his motions from the vestry window. A quarter of an hour was apparently expended in useless argument and appeal on the part of De Valmont, while the priest doggedly maintained his ground against solicitation. The chevalier grew desperate—he foamed at the mouth—and his whole frame quivered with rage. At that moment—in the midst of his mental perturbation—an idea seems to have struck him; for he drew forth his pocket-book, wrote something on a scrap of paper, and rendered it to the Abbé. A slight hesitation was then visible on the part of the priest—the chevalier pressed his point—and St. Joseph accepted the proffered slip of paper, which he immediately consigned to his pocket. This transaction—apparently of such vital importance to the chevalier—having been concluded, himself and the Abbé entered the church together by a side door, and hurried to the vestry.

When Madame de Valmont returned home, at four o'clock, from the performance of her religious duties at St. Sulpice, she was surprised by finding a note from her husband, waiting for her in the porter's lodge. She hastily tore it open—doubtless an unpleasant impression, caused by a guilty conscience, for a moment agitated her mind—and she read the following words:—

"*Chère amie*,—I shall have the pleasure of dining with you at our usual hour. My business did not detain me at the Bourse so long as I had at first anticipated. I have invited the Count and Countess, and Hector, to dine with us this evening. Prepare accordingly.

"Your affectionate husband,

"DE VALMONT."

"Amelie," said Madame de Valmont to her *femme-de-chambre*, "Monsieur is certainly beside himself. He has invited M. Hector to the house!"

"Did I not always assure your ladyship," returned the Abigail, "that Monsieur was not acquainted even with the name of jealousy?"

"But this is so singular!" persisted Eugenie, a vague mis-giving and presentiment of evil shooting across her imagination. "M. de Valmont was never accustomed to invite Hector to the hotel: indeed, he has often said that he could not endure his haughty and overbearing manners—such is his expression--although for my part—" and Eugenie checked herself, and blushed deeply.

No farther conversation took place upon the subject between Amelie and her mistress; but the all-important business of the *toilette* was immediately commenced.

At half-past six the chevalier returned home, and in a few minutes afterwards the guests were introduced to the *salon*. Dinner was shortly served up—and every one remarked that the chevalier had never before appeared so attentive and courteous towards his wife. This behaviour may be easily accounted for, when it is considered that not wishing to seem to have experienced any annoyance, the excellent gentleman carried his politeness a little too far, so fearful might we suppose him to have been of betraying his emotions.

When the dessert was placed upon the table, the chevalier redoubled his attentions towards his wife, whose timid glances were now and then furtively met and returned by Hector. At length the count rallied De Valmont on his domestic *politesse*, and a variety of witty remarks were made by him and the countess on the subject.

"The felicity existing in the marriage state," said the chevalier, "should never be used as a matter of light conversation nor ridicule. So seldom is it, in these licentious times, that a husband and wife are found to entertain reciprocal feelings of attachment, and occupy their minds solely in conducing to the happiness of each other—"

"Do you not see, Monsieur," interrupted Eugenie, "that all the decanters are at your end of the table?"

The chevalier bowed politely, passed the wine, and continued to expatiate on the beauties of matrimonial happiness, affectionate husbands, faithful wives, and honourable relations. Hector and Eugenie both endeavoured to change the conversation in vain.

"There is at this moment," observed De Valmont, "amongst the wide circle of my acquaintance, a couple whose lot is far from enviable; and the domestic miseries of that unhappy pair are alone deducible from the cruelty of the lady's parents—or guardians, I forget which—who thwarted her inclinations, and obliged her to espouse an individual old enough to command respect, but too far advanced in years for her. The tale is affecting and terrible at the same time.

The young bride—whose heart and plight were already given to her cousin—was not long before she forgot her duties towards her husband, and—although there be in *her* conduct certain extenuating circumstances to palliate the enormity of her guilt, for she was inexperienced, and therefore easily led astray—still she encouraged the nocturnal visits of her lover. A letter—accidentally mislaid—revealed the whole history of his disgrace and dishonour to the injured husband, who was yet, nevertheless, determined to hear from the lips of his own wife the confession of her crimes. He did so; a large bribe secured the services of a priest—that priest was an almoner of the family—and was the one who attended the weekly confessional of the guilty lady! —Ah! Eugenie, you are pale—you are ill—" cried the chevalier in a tone of the most ineffable disdain, while Hector sate stupified in his chair, and the count and countess looked at each other in doubt, uncertainty, and silent astonishment, for they were not able to comprehend the meaning of this singular scene.

The chevalier rose from his chair, struck his hand violently upon the table, and continued in a voice of thunder—" Yes! you, Monsieur de Lamoreau, were rejoiced to receive my proposals in favour of your niece, because they suited your ambitious purposes, and precluded the possibility of an union between your son and a portionless girl. I am the old man—the old fool—the dolt—the idiot—whose pride was flattered, and whose vanity was gratified, by the prospect of espousing a young and beautiful girl; you, Eugenie, are the faithless wife, whose inexperience and *niaisèrie* have been more fatal to my happiness than aught beside; and you, Hector, are the villain who has robbed the old man of his treasure, who has polluted his threshold, cast dirt upon his hoary locks, and wrested from him the only source of felicity he could henceforth have looked to in this world! Yes—you, Hector —you, more criminal, ten thousand times than that faulty thing, whose ruin may be traced to the ambition of her cruel uncle, and the wiles of her lover—you, Hector, are the wretch—the miscreant, whom society should learn to shun, whom mankind should hunt through the world like the poisonous reptile which stings us while we sleep! This afternoon, Eugenie, were the walls of yon sacred church polluted by the murmuring echoes of your unhallowed confession; and I—I, your injured husband—I, Eugenie, was the one, who, seated in the box, heard you relate your crimes, and dared—to save appearances—to give you absolution. By this time Saint Joseph—the vile instrument that your seducer introduced to quiet the qualms of your conscience—is far away, bearing with him the produce of additional villany."

"Great God! protect me!" cried Eugenie, and she fell senseless upon the floor.

The countess hastened to assist her unfortunate niece; and the chevalier seized the opportunity to beckon Hector out of the room. A moment elapsed ere M. de Lamoreau, whose imagination was totally bewildered and whose frame was entirely unnerved by the terrible occurrences of the evening, perceived their departure. But when he saw their places empty, parental fear suggested to his mind the probable cause of their absence, and he ran from the room almost distracted, calling for the servants and the police in the same breath. A

Gendarme was passing by the gate of the hotel at the time, and the vociferations of the count met his ears. He immediately ran into the court-yard, rushed up the grand staircase, and hastily entered the room whence the count had issued, and where the events of the evening had taken place. Madame de Valmont was slowly recovering from a state of insensibility, and was calling wildly upon her husband to pardon her. The Gendarme looked around for some one to explain the causes of these strange disturbances—they have since been too well narrated and made known through the joint information of Lafleur, Amelie, the beadle of Saint Sulpice, and the principal actors in the scene—but all was confusion, alarm, and dismay. Suddenly the report of a pistol struck upon his ears.

"Great God!" cried Eugenie; "he has killed him! Hector—Hector—Chevalier de Valmont—Oh! spare, spare each other—mercy, for my sake!"

The Gendarme was about to leave the room, and proceed in the direction whence the report of the pistol had appeared to come, when a young man, pale, bleeding, and with horror depicted upon his countenance, staggered into the apartment.

"Oh! Hector—Hector!" exclaimed Eugenie, and once more relapsed into a state of unconsciousness.

"My son—my son!" screamed the countess, precipitating herself into his arms: "thank God, *you* are safe!—But where is the Chevalier de Valmont?"

"By this time on his way to another land—a post-chaise waited below," returned the young man, scarcely able to articulate a single word.

"And that pistol—" cried the agonized mother.

"Has righteously punished an offender," said Hector, sinking on a chair, and pointing to his breast. "We drew lots to decide who should first use the deadly weapon—" here his voice became thicker—"Fortune decided in favour of the chevalier—" his words were now almost inaudible—"he fired—the aim was unerring—and my wound—is—mortal!"

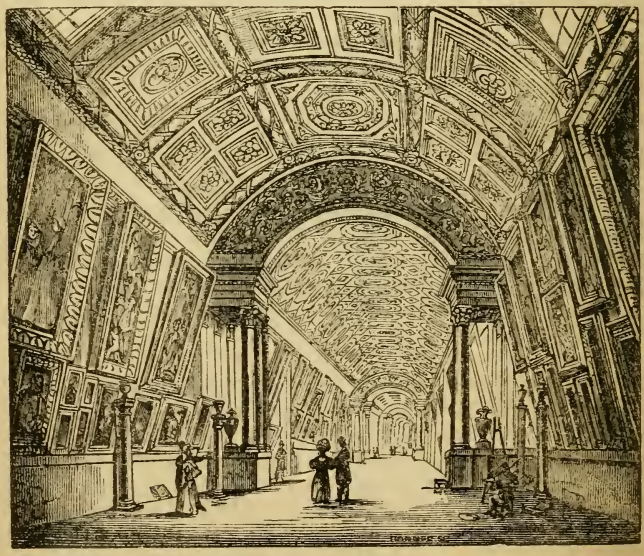
* * * * * * *

The blue sky of Paris smiles above the tall towers of Saint Sulpice; and since the celebration of the gorgeous bridal ceremony before described, in the aisle of that sacred edifice the funeral rites have been performed for two individuals whose names principally figure in the preceding tale. Now, in a vault beneath the green sod of Père La Chaise, repose the remains of the Vicomte Hector de Lamoreau. At a little distance—separated only by a few cypress trees—in the tomb belonging to the family into which she married, and at the express desire of her husband who wrote from London a brief though touching letter to the heart-broken Count De Lamoreau to that effect, is interred the body of Eugenie de Valmont!

CHAPTER XXIX.

VISIT TO THE LOUVRE.—MR. HOOK WALKER CONFERS AN ANTIQUARIAN RELIC UPON MR. PICKWICK, AND REQUESTS A SLIGHT SERVICE IN RETURN.—THE WHITE GREAT-COAT, &c.—VICTOR HUGO'S "WORLD IN MINIATURE."

Under the especial protection of Mr. Hook Walker, Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Tupman, one morning visited the Gallery of the Loûvre, and passed an agreeable couple of hours in surveying the magnificent building, as well as the admirably executed pictures which grace its walls. They first admired with unfeigned delight the Hall of the Caryatides, with its beautiful sculpture, its statues, its vases, its columns, and its urns; and thence proceeded to that picture-gallery, which is the boast of Paris and the wonder of the whole world, for its extent and arrangements. Instead of a paltry *suite* of three or four miserable rooms, as deficient in ornament and architectural embellishment as they are wretched in extent—instead of a woefully circumscribed space for the reception of the grand national specimens of the art of painting—the Gallery of the Loûvre is a museum of which the



French may well be proud, and which must form to the eye of the Englishman who visits Paris, a singular contrast with the sorry building that now exists as a monument of bad taste and ill-judged economy in Trafalgar Square. Conceive the National Gallery of England, with its three lanthorns on the roof, suddenly transported to the vicinity of the Loûvre, in order to render the contrast the more striking!

Having, as we before stated, passed two very agreeable hours in the Gallery of Paintings, Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle proceeded to the Palais Royal to refresh themselves with ices and fresh air in the Garden while Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Walker pursued a different

direction. The systematic gentleman embellished on this especial occasion a new suit of clothes, having prudently obtained an introduction to Mr. Pickwick's Parisian tailor, whose name was Mignot, and whose abode was and is in the Rue de Rivoli. He therefore threw no small degree of pretension into his gait and manners, as he conducted his philanthropic companion to the Hotel Mirabeau in the Rue de la Paix.

"It is a most singular Egyptian vase, that I wish to show you," cried Mr. Hook Walker, when he had introduced Mr. Pickwick into his apartment in the aforesaid hotel. "A part of my system has always been to collect precious relics of antiquity; and there is every reason to believe that this vase has seen many centuries."

Mr. Walker accordingly produced an old mushroom-pickle bottle or jar, which he had bought with the condiments it contained some weeks previously, and which is of a very peculiar shape and colour in France. Mr. Pickwick received it with great respect, turned it over and over in his hands, and eyed it with a species of reverence that would have excited the risible muscles of any one save the systematic Mr. Walker.

"Very singular," said Mr. Pickwick, with that felicity of perception which made him what he was: "I wonder in whose time this was fabricated!"

"In the time of Pharaoh, I should think," urged Mr. Walker, who for the last few minutes had been busily engaged in extricating sundry articles of apparel from his trunk, and placing them on chairs about the room. "Do you not smell something peculiar about that jar?"

"I think I do," said Mr. Pickwick, taking a pretty long sniff, as he poked his nose into the mouth of the pot; "and—but it is almost ridiculous to say so—one would think it smelt of mushrooms or catsup."

"That is my proof," dogmatically exclaimed Mr. Walker. "Immediately after the overflowings of the Nile, there was of course always plenty of mushrooms; and as the Children of Israel lived in the fields, they were most likely very fond of those little articles of consumption. It will not then require a very considerable stretch of the imagination, to fancy that the Israelites were fond of pickled mushrooms, and that this was one of their jars."

Mr. Pickwick perfectly acquiesced in this system of reasoning, and accepted the mysterious jar with the most heart-felt thanks. His eye then fell for the first time on the singular occupation of Mr. Hook Walker.

"Pray might I enquire why you inspect your clothes and linen in the middle of the day?" demanded Mr. Pickwick: "I hope there are no thieves in the hotel," added the great man, naturally alarmed for the safety of his newly acquired Egyptian relic.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Hook Walker, "I'm merely going to turn conveyancer this afternoon."

"Ah! a lawyer—I see," said Mr. Pickwick. "But what do you arrange your clothes now for?"

"Will you do me a favour, old fellow?" demanded Mr. Walker, suddenly turning towards Mr. Pickwick, and speaking in a tone of unusual familiarity and levity. "I wish you would," he added, hastily: "I shall win a large sum of money by a bet, if you could."

"Certainly," returned the good-natured Mr. Pickwick, who, having already advanced sundry loans to Mr. Walker, was apprehensive of another application for a similar service.

"Well—the truth is this," continued Mr. Hook Walker, again assuming his usual systematic tone and manner. "You see all these clothes—they are bran new—" which indeed they were, the aforesaid M. Mignot having brought them home only a few days before, upon Mr. Pickwick's responsibility—"and it is necessary that I should convey them out of this hotel without letting them be seen by any one in it."

"Put them into a trunk, then," suggested Mr. Pickwick, with that foresight that never left him.

"That is against the laws of the bet, and the system I had to propose," observed Mr. Walker, deliberately surveying Mr. Pickwick from top to toe.

"How can it be managed, then?" demanded that gentleman, considerably perplexed, and equally anxious to oblige a friend.

"Excuse me, Mr. Pickwick," said Mr. Walker, "but you are rather fat, and I am not very thin. Any additional clothing on stout people is never perceived."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, casting a cursory glance at himself in the nearest looking-glass, and complacently surveying those tights and gaiters which have filled worlds with their undying renown.

"Fact, my dear Sir: calculation to a nicety is a part of my system," cried Mr. Walker. "So—if you would but have the kindness—twould be the making of me—and then you know I could settle the little matter between us—"

"Pray go on," said Mr. Pickwick, not at all displeased by the nature of the prospects thus held out.

"What I mean is," continued Mr. Walker, "that you and I could conceal all those clothes about our persons, and carry them out of the hotel as nicely as possible."

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick; "I never thought of that."

Mr. Walker took this observation as an unequivocal acquiescence in the scheme; and almost before Mr. Pickwick had time to reflect maturely upon what his friend was about to do, his coat was suddenly taken off his back, his waistcoat unbuttoned, and two or three pairs of trowsers tied beneath it round his waist. The waistcoat was then buttoned up once more; and a couple of shirts were stowed away in Mr. Pickwick's breast: his pockets and hat were filled with stockings; and then his coat was once more endorsed upon him by the skilful Mr. Walker, who declared with unfeigned delight that the additional clothing quite improved Mr. Pickwick's figure. That gentleman did not, however, appear to think so; and when Mr. Walker requested him to put on a thick white great-coat, with sundry capes over the rest, his heart actually sank within him. Mr. Walker, however, assumed so piteous and imploring a face, that all objection was over-ruled, and the great-coat speedily covered the form of our venerable and respected hero.

This arrangement being complete, Mr. Walker proceeded to submit himself to a similar process, and arranged his vestments about his

body with a skilfulness and celerity which appeared to Mr. Pickwick meritorious and extraordinary to a degree. There was, however, no white great-coat with capes for him to put on: so the party being thus armed, prepared to sally forth, Mr. Walker, in order, as he said, to win his bet fairly, having very honourably concealed even his brushes and shaving apparatus about his person.

It was about the middle of May when this incident took place; and a more broiling sun never scorched the pavement of Paris, nor rendered the use of simples and preventives more necessary to the ladies It was therefore eminently interesting to behold Mr. Pickwick and Mr Walker descend the stairs of the hotel arm-in-arm, and hasten into the court-yard, which they had to traverse to gain the gate; the former airily attired in the thick white coat, and looking peculiarly cool and comfortable, and both increased in size to no trifling extent. The wager was, however, to be won; and Mr. Pickwick was resolved manfully to assist his friend in carrying off the prize.

The court-yard of the Hotel Mirabeau is a very long one; and just as Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Walker were striding rapidly down it, a pair of trowsers disengaged themselves from the waist of the former gentleman, and fell to the ground. Fain would he have stooped to pick up the provoking garment; but Mr. Walker hurried him along at a furious rate, the perspiration running down their faces as if they had just emerged from a shower-bath. Scarcely was the entrance gained, when a second pair of unmentionables—albeit mentioned before—followed the course adopted by its precursor, and awoke the suspicions of a waiter loitering near the gates. A slight circumstance somewhat unfavourable also to the singular appearance of the two gentlemen, was the amount of three thousand francs owing by Mr. Hook Walker to the proprietor of the hotel. The waiter accordingly acted with becoming caution, and requested Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Walker to accompany him into the nearest room, if they did not wish to be forwarded to the adjacent guard-house. There was no other alternative than to accept this polite invitation, a proceeding that was unanimously agreed to and adopted by the individuals principally concerned in the matter.

"This is very awkward—very ridiculous, indeed," said Mr. Pickwick, as he hastily divested himself of the great-coat and other vestments which encumbered him.

"It is a part of the French system," was the consolatory reply given by Mr. Hook Walker.

So indeed it appeared to be; if Mr. Walker's assertion might be corroborated by the fact of the entrance of the master of the hotel and half-a-dozen waiters, who cast no very loving looks upon Mr. Pickwick and his companion.

"The rogues—the English vagabonds!" exclaimed the proprietor of the hotel in a desperate passion, which he shortly alleviated by such a string of French oaths as never before had met the ears of Mr. Pickwick.

"De villains!" cried the waiters in unanimous anger and concert.

Mr. Pickwick rose to explain. The landlord would admit of no explanation; so Mr. Pickwick sate down again; and the abusive epithets, the oaths, and the passion were spoken or enacted once more, for the full behoof of the two English gentlemen.

At length Mr. Pickwick obtained an audience; and, in his usual emphatic manner, at once carried conviction to the minds of all present; although it has been argued that his eloquence, which was certainly very powerful, was much less conducive to peace and an amicable arrangement than the well-lined purse which in his indignation he threw upon the table, offering at the same time to settle any demand that there might be upon Mr. Walker, in order to vindicate his own character from the aspersions which malignity and calumny might throw upon it. A cheque for the amount due was accordingly drawn upon Messieurs Rothschild, and the proprietor and waiters of the hotel simultaneously declared "that they knew it was a bit of fun all along, and that they never had for one moment suspected the honourable designs of either gentleman"—a statement which Mr. Pickwick, however, thought there was some reason for doubting.

The matter being thus satisfactorily arranged, and Mr. Walker having succeeded in making peace with Mr. Pickwick, the former hastened to arrange his clothes in a trunk, assuring his friend "that he would yet win the bet;" while the latter turned quickly away from the hotel, and crossed the Rue de la Paix in order to gain the Boulevards by the Rue Neuve des Capucines, at the end of which the tricoloured banner waved over the spacious gate-way of the gorgeous palace inhabited by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It was at this portal, that in the three days of glorious revolution which hurled a tyrant from his desecrated seat, and paved the way for the ascent of a dynasty whose sons shall long rule with honour to themselves, and benefit to the greatest of nations—it was at this portal that the army of the citizens halted, and pursued their conquests no farther; for the cannon, ranged upon the parapets of the Madeleine at the end of the Boulevard, commanded all the intervening space, and thus afforded means of safe egress to Polignac, when the damnable counsels he had proffered the royal tyrant in his palace at St. Cloud had brought about the results anticipated by all France!

Of a knowledge of these particulars Mr. Pickwick was perfectly innocent, as he hastily walked towards the Rue Royale, thoroughly disgusted with his morning's achievement, and wondering how philanthropy like his could so often experience ingratitude, disaster, or defeat.

Messieurs Tupman and Winkle had not returned when Mr. Pickwick arrived at his abode, but there was a letter waiting for him, which Mr. Weller forthwith consigned to his hands. The contents were an invitation to dinner with Mr. Scuttle for himself and friends on the following day; and a translation of Victor Hugo's last poem by the amiable Mrs. Weston. Mr. Pickwick's private notes do not say which was the more agreeable of the two; certain it is, however, that he sate down and wrote to accept the invitation before he perused the poem—a circumstance and the inferences that may be drawn from which, we leave to the discussion of commentators. Mr. Pickwick, having despatched his faithful valet with the note to the Rue Taitbout, wiped his spectacles, consulted his watch to ascertain how long it might be to dinner-time, and then settled himself in his easy chair to read the following effusion of the second greatest poet of the age, De Lamartine being unquestionably the first.

THE WORLD IN MINIATURE.*

The hall is gay with lamp and lustre bright—
The feast to every palate gives delight;
The hungry guests devour the sav'ry food,
And eat profusely, for the cheer is good;
And at that table—where the wise are few—
Both sexes and all ages meet the view;
The sturdy warrior with a thoughtful face—
The am'rous youth—the maid replete with grace—
The prattling infant—and the hoary hair
Of second childhood's proselytes—are there;—
And the most greedy, in that spacious hall,
Are e'er the young, or oldest of them all!

Helmet and banner—ornament and crest—
The lion rampant—and the jewell'd vest—
The silver star, that glitter'd fair and bright—
The arms that told of many a nation's might—
Th' heraldic blazonry—th' ancestral pride—
And all mankind could e'er invent beside—
The wingëd leopard—and the eagle wild—
All these encircle woman, chief, and child,
Shine on the carpet underneath their feet,
Adorn the dishes that contain their meat,
And hang upon the drap'ry, which around
Falls from the lofty ceiling to the ground,
While on the floor its waving fringe is spread,
As the bird's wings may sweep the rose's bed.—
Thus is the banquet rul'd by Noise and Light,
As though they two were foemen in the fight!

The chamber echoes to the din of them
Who throng around—each with his diadem—
Each seated on a throne—each with a wand
Or glittering sceptre in his feeble hand—
And on each foot—Oh! is the lesson vain?—
Is fixed by stubborn Fate a galling chain:
Thus hope of flight were futile from that hall—
And the chief guest was more enslav'd than all!
Th' intoxicating draught that fires the soul—
All ardent Love, who boasts of no controul,
Form'd of the sexual breath—(an idle name,
Offspring of Fancy and a nervous frame)—
Pleasure, mad daughter of the darksome Night,
Whose eye is languid with returning light—
The gallant huntsman, o'er the fences borne
By stalworth charger, to the sounding horn—
The glitt'ring silk—the bed of leaves of rose,
Made more to please the sight than court repose;
Where, when your mistress clasps you in her arms,
No envious vest need hide her budding charms—
The mighty palaces that raise the sneer
Of jealous mendicants and wretches near—

* This singular poem, which appeared in a French periodical in 1835, has since been re-published, in Victor Hugo's "Chants du Crespuscule," with the date of 1832, and under the title of *Noces et Festins*.

The spacious parks, from whence th' horizon blue
Beyond the verdant foliage meets the view ;
Where Superstition still her walk will take,
And where soft music echoes o'er the Lake—
The transient modesty of maids undone—
The qualms of judges whom small brib'ry won—
The dread of children, trembling as they play—
The bliss of monarchs potent in their sway—
The note of war—the deadly culverin,
That shakes the fortress with unholy din—
The serri'd legions rushing to the fight—
The city full of pleasure and delight—
And all that human-kind can form or know
To have existence on this earth below—
With gold—the prize for which ten thousands bait
A subtle hook, that ever, as they wait,
Catches a weed, and drags them to their fate :—
Such were the dainties on that table spread,
Such were the meats whereby those guests were fed!
A hundred slaves around the chamber stood,
And serv'd each one with all he thought was good ;
While day and night fell Destiny prepar'd
The sumptuous banquet thus so largely shar'd !
And that each guest might learn to suit his taste,
Beside his chair was Conscience ever placed ;
For Conscience' piercing eyes could well detect
The dainty morsel, and the bad reject,
Although that self-same Conscience oft be blind,
When doom'd to stand a monarch's throne behind!

Oh ! at tnat table there be all the great,
The proud, the mighty—majesty and state :—
Dread Bacchanalian revel ! yet how grand,
Thus to allure the natives of each land !
Yes—for long shouts of laughter echo round—
And mirth—and joy—and revelry abound ;
The bowl flows freely—and the wine is bright—
And ev'ry eye-ball glistens with delight.

But, ah—great God !—While yet your Hebés pour
Forth in the cups the liquors ye adore—
While yet, fair guests ! the bowl is richly stor'd,
And while fresh dainties reek upon the board—
And while th' orchestra lifts unto the sky,
To tuneful harps, the voice of melody—
'Tis now—O Madness !—reckless of the bliss
That gleams around—in such an hour as this—
An awful footstep mounts the echoing stair—
A horrid sound proclaims intruders there—
A heavy tramp that bids all mirth be done—
Nearer—more near—who is the dreaded One?

Close not the door !—With haste, and deep-drawn breath
The stranger enters—and that stranger's Death !
With him comes Exile, cloth'd in foreign guise,
And both with fury flashing from their eyes.

Dread is that sight!—They enter in the hall,
And cast a gloomy shade upon them all:
Each guest is stupified with inward fear,
As Death and Exile seize their victims near,
And bear them from the banquet, while their brain
Seeks to dispel the fumes of wine in vain!

Having brought the perusal of this poem to a conclusion, Mr. Pickwick declared to himself that it was very beautiful, and wondered why Mrs. Weston should have taken the trouble to translate it for him. He then thought that Mrs. Weston was a very amiable person, and was not at all displeased to find himself in some measure the object of her care and solicitude; having come to which conclusions, he was resolved to make himself as agreeable as possible to her the next time they met. His ruminations, the nature of which had shed a glow of satisfaction and radiant felicity over his animated countenance, were scarcely brought to a conclusion, when the entrance of his friends and the sound of Mr. Weller's voice in the antechamber, singing the highly popular air of "Barclay and Perkins's Dray-man," reminded him that the hour of dinner was approaching. He accordingly retired to his bed-room to make preparations for that important ceremony.

CHAPTER XXX.

FRANCONI'S CIRCUS IN THE CHAMPS ELYSEES.—MESSIEURS BRANDENBERGH AND PEACOCK AGAIN INTRODUCED TO THE READER.—MR. WELLER'S VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF THE ENGLISH CONSUL, AND THE IMPRESSIONS HE THERE RECEIVED.

What a wonderful place is Franconi's! Astley's is but "cakes and gingerbread" to it. M. Franconi was the lessee of a theatre on the Boulevard du Temple, in which his equestrian representations took place in winter, and the proprietor of a large wooden amphitheatre in which he and his followers exhibited their talents in the summer.

The latter is invariably crowded to excess: the admittance is cheap—the sports attractive to the middling and lower orders of society—and the locality, which is the Champs Elysées, is peculiarly convenient for the appointments which the young clerks of the public offices make with the pretty milliners of the Faubourg du Roule.

With such attractions to recommend a visit to this charming place of entertainment, the reader must not be surprised if the four front seats on the right side of the orchestra were one evening filled by Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Scuttle; and another immediately behind them by Mr. Samuel Weller. They were all in their best clothes and spirits; and if the audience did not perceive that they were five very eminent men, it must be supposed that the performance of the equestrians absorbed the general attention, and diverted it from the contemplation of other and more important matters.

And most interesting feats were those accomplished by M. Franconi's troop. First came Mademoiselle Armantine, and performed a thousand capers upon horseback, disdaining all reins and such-like vulgar appendages, and waving two tricoloured flags most gallantly in her hands. Then she leapt over a number of bars—or rather the horse did for her, while she stood perpendicularly upon the animal's back; and, when this exhibition was brought to a conclusion, she tripped nimbly to the ground, made a low bow, and disappeared amidst the shouts and applauses of the spectators.

"That young ooman don't make herself a dancin' kangaroo for nothin' at all," observed Mr. Weller, leaning forward, and whispering to his master; "von 'ud think as how she'd bin born a-top of a horse, and made it her cradle. She seems to do it all improwisatris-like, as they says o' the vandering poets."

"It is very remarkable, Sam," coincided Mr. Pickwick. "I wonder how they come to be so expert in their feats of horsemanship."

"I'll tell you how it is, Sir," said Mr. Weller with a knowing wink. "Them young gals is fust born in a stable; after vich their mothers gets a little up in the vorld and lets them sleep upon horse-hair sofas, from vich they imbibes their fust impressions. Then, ven they can run alone, they rides on sticks, and mops, or vot not; and ven they gets a little older they has a wooden horse to practise on. In process o' time they're placed on a donkey for farther exercise—then they falls in love vith a cavalry soldier—then they rides on a horse in reality; and in this vay, you see, Sir, it comes nat'ral to them, as the pickpocket said ven he saw his three small children a-goin' to the house of cor-rection for the third time."

"Well—that is not an improbable way of explaining the mystery, Sam," remarked Mr. Pickwick, considerably edified by his servant's discourse. "But what should you think if you were to see the young lady have a desperate fall from her horse?"

"That she'd better get up again, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, after a moment's hesitation.

This truly edifying conversation was put a stop to by the entrance of a little pony dressed up in all the panoply and accoutrements of a modern war-horse, and followed by a small boy, whose age might be about eight or nine, and whose garb was that of Napoleon. These two miniature specimens of animated nature then commenced a series of exploits in eachother's society—the pony obeying the dictates of his little master, and the little master himself achieving two or three falls as he essayed to leap upon the said pony's back. The audience, however, applauded, because he was dressed as Napoleon; and each failure only elicited more clamorous approbation. At length the pony and boy walked away together; and then the handsome Madame Lejears made her appearance in the arena.

This lady's feats pretty well resembled those performed by Mademoiselle Armantine; but more *éclat* was attached to them by the spectators, inasmuch as it was whispered that the lady previous to becoming the wife of M. Lejears, had succumbed to the wiles of the highest Duke in the kingdom; and that a sum of twenty thousand francs in ready money, and a quarter of that amount *per annum*, had been the principal inducements to M. Lejears to accept her as his spouse, and

acknowledge a small infant, which she possessed, as his own. Money is a strange dye for changing the colour of the glasses in the telescope through which we look at other people's faults; and if it have not the actual capacity of giving them the appearance of virtues, it at least essentially palliates the darkness of their shades.

The music now struck up one of its gayest airs, which Mr. Weller nevertheless expressed his firm conviction to be "the tune the old cow died of," and Madame Lejears was in the midst of one of those highly decent and fascinating attitudes which enabled the whole audience, as she made the circuit of the *arena*, to plunge their licentious looks into the recesses of her low-bodied *corsage*, when Mr. Weller felt his right arm suddenly pulled, and on turning to ascertain who had thus favoured him, he distinguished the gay and laughing countenances of Messieurs Brandenbergh and Peacock.

"Evenin', gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller, adroitly pulling his forelock.

"Just the chap we want," observed Mr. Peacock to Mr. Brandenbergh.

"Just," coincided Mr. Brandenbergh with Mr. Peacock; and then they both surveyed Sam from top to toe with most critical precision; while the object of their scrutiny threw himself gracefully back upon his seat and stared at them in return.

"Will you step out with us a moment?" enquired Mr. Peacock, as soon as his survey was concluded.

"That ain't wery difficult to do," returned Mr. Weller. "But von't you say a vord to the governor fust?"

"No—no—we haven't got time now, Sam," hastily observed Mr. Peacock. "We have some very particular business to transact, and must enlist your good will in our services."

"Vell, gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller, "if there ain't no burglary and no willany in the matter, I'm your man. But if so be you're arter robbin' the Bank of France, or valkin' into von of the churches, or a-aimin' at the King, I von't have nothing for to say to you, as the devil observed to Don Giowanni."

"It's all right, Sam," said Mr. Brandenbergh; "and a devilish lucky chance it was too that brought us here to-night, or else we might never have thought of having recourse to your services."

"Wery admirably reasoned," remarked Mr. Weller; and, in obedience to the impatient gesticulations of Mr. Peacock, he followed the two gentlemen out of the theatre, unperceived by Mr. Pickwick and his companions, who were at that moment discussing the merits of long and short petticoats.

"Now, then—to business," said Mr. Peacock, when himself, Mr. Brandenbergh, and Mr. Weller were safe in the open air, and at a suitable distance from the equestrian circus:—"Now then to business."

"That's vot the church-vardens say, ven they're all drunk at the westry-dinner," observed Mr. Weller.

"Well—well—Sam," cried Mr. Brandenbergh, impatiently. "The fact is, we're in a little difficulty at this moment—a small matter of debt—and—"

"An' you ain't got no money to pay it," said Mr. Weller.

"Precisely," returned Mr. Brandenbergh; "and, therefore we are

desirous of leaving—that is, merely absenting ourselves for a time from this gay city."

"Vell, Sir—take your places by the fust diligence, an' be off like bricks," suggested Mr. Weller.

"That is precisely our plan," said Mr. Peacock, impatiently. "But writs are out against us—there's no use in disguising the truth, d—n it!—our passports are stopped, and we can't very well get away without them."

"Vell, this *is* a rum go," cried Mr. Weller. "But in vot manner an' by vot means can I assist you, gen'lemen?"

"The truth is, Sam,—you must get us passports," returned Mr Peacock.

"Where?" enquired Mr. Weller.

"At the English consul's office," was the answer.

"An' how?" was the next and very natural query.

Mr. Brandenbergh stepped forward to explain.

"Sam," said that gentleman, prudently gliding a couple of Napoleons into Mr. Weller's hand—

"Wery powerful reasonin' again you've begun vith," interrupted Sam, as he conveyed the money to his breeches-pocket.

"You must go the first thing to-morrow morning," said Mr. Brandenbergh, with an audible chuckle, "and ask for two passports, one for Mr. Tupman, and the other for Mr. Winkle. We can then get them filled up ourselves at the *Prefecture*, and must bear those gentlemen's names as far as Boulogne. The English consul will give you the documents without the slightest hesitation."

"As for getting the dockyments, gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller, "I'll villingly engage to do that 'ere, an' no sangvinary mistake, as the polite nobleman observed to the Lord Chancellor in the Upper House. But, farther than that I'll not ventur' my own personal and peculiar safety."

"That is all we require of you, Sam," exclaimed Mr. Peacock. "So mind and be punctual to-morrow morning, and come to us in the middle avenue in the Tuileries' gardens."

"Right as a trivet," responded Mr. Weller; "vich vos the remark made by the young lady ven they asked her how she felt as she vent to be married."

Messieurs Brandenbergh and Peacock then took leave of their functionary; and pursued their way towards the Barriere de L'Etoile, while Mr. Weller himself returned to attend his master, and wait the issue of the performance.

On the following morning Mr. Weller rose early, achieved his toilet and his breakfast, and brushed away toward the English Ambassador's Hotel, after having done the same to his master's clothes. Arrived at the diplomatic abode, he passed quickly into a little office situate in the right-hand corner of the court-yard, near the gate, and was speedily in the presence of the consul himself. An elderly man, of ragged and tattered appearance, was already occupying that functionary's attention; and Mr. Weller therefore became an unavoidable spectator of the following scene, and a listener to the ensuing conversation.

"Impossible, my good fellow,—totally impossible," said the consul

in a meek tone of voice, which, however, very much belied its owner's disposition. "One of your creditors is an individual whom his Excellency, Lord Pompus, would not like to offend."

"This is very unfortunate," murmured the poor devil, with a bitter sigh. "My only chance is to get to England—my own native country—or else I shall be arrested to-day, and I see no other prospect but that of dying in gaol."

"Very sorry, my dear fellow," said the consul, looking as happy as men who have little to vex them and a good income usually do: "but your creditors have applied to stop your passport, and therefore I cannot grant one on any account."

"Then I am ruined," cried the man; "and that's all about it. I shouldn't care for myself; but I've a wife and seven children—and—and—" the poor fellow's voice was almost choked in sobs—"it is very hard to see them wanting bread in a gaol, for that will be my lot!"

The consul shook his head, pursed up his mouth, yet said nothing.

"And with so capital an idea too," continued the man, "which I could turn to such a good account in London!"

"Pray, my fine fellow, what is that?" enquired the consul, somewhat impatiently.

"Why, Sir," replied the poor Englishman, "if you would'nt mention it again—nor—"

"Nor what?" demanded the consul.

"Nor take it up yourself," answered the poor fellow, timidly, "I would'nt mind letting you into the secret."

"Well—well! what is it?" asked the consul.

"Why, Sir," said the man, in a sort of half-whisper, "'tis a couple of opposition self-taught Industrious Fleas, that'll carry a Napoleon twice as big as the one now exhibiting in the Strand."

"Industrious Fleas!" shouted the consul, in an agony of rage.

"Yes, Sir," said the man; "and a very excellent speculation it is, too: that's the reason I'm afeerd to tell it to any one."

"Simcox!" exclaimed the consul louder than before.

"Sir," said an individual with red hair, suddenly appearing from an inner office.

"Put that fellow out of the place, Simcox," said the consul; and Mr. Simcox obeyed with an alacrity that admirably exemplified his readiness to enact the part of a good consular clerk—such being the terms upon which he retained his situation.

No sooner was the unfortunate speculator in the capacities and powers of fleas thus forcefully ejected, than a young gentleman, of about two-and-twenty, dressed in the extreme of fashion, and switching a riding-whip in his hand, rushed into the office.

"Ah! Whickford, my boy," exclaimed the little gentleman, "how are you this morning? At all seedy after last night's dissipation, eh?"

"Oh! not in the least, my lord," returned the consul, with a very polite bow. "But pray sit down, and tell me what I can have the pleasure of doing for your lordship this morning. Here, Simcox,—hand Lord Logmore a chair."

Mr. Simcox once more emerged from his den, placed the seat as he was required to do, and vanished.

"You know that cursed horse-dealer, Whickford, who came to stop my passport the other day?" continued Lord Logmore.

The consul nodded an assen .

"Well, he sent this morning to say that he should arrest me—arrest me, Lord Logmore—yes, arrest me—"

"Arrest *you*!" exclaimed Mr. Whickford.

"Yes, arrest me this afternoon," proceeded his lordship, "if I don't cash up, and pay him every farthing."

"The rascal!" cried Mr. Whickford, most energetically. "But what do you mean to do?"

"Why cut—run—bolt, to be sure," returned his lordship. "I've already ordered the horses. and only want the passport."

"Certainly," said Mr. Whickford; and he immediately ordered Mr. Simcox to prepare the document required.

In five minutes the passport was ready, and at one o'clock P. M. Lord Logmore left Paris in his chaise and four, about the same time that the unfortunate applicant for a passport above mentioned was conveyed to St. Pelagie, where he died of a broken heart in the course of three or four months, leaving a wife and large family without the means of obtaining a morsel of bread.

When Lord Logmore had departed, Mr. Weller made known his business, and the abilities of Mr. Simcox were again put into requisition.

"It would have been more regular, had Mr. Winkle and Mr. Tupman called themselves," observed the consul carelessly, as he glanced his eye over the documents: "but I know that they are gentlemen—indeed, they visit the Ambassador—and that is quite enough for me."

"An' wery right you air to think so too, Sir," said Mr. Weller, consigning the documents to his pocket. "But vot a wery great pity it where that the poor feller as come jist now for *his* passport didn't wisit the hambassador also."

"Ah! ah! ah! you're a facetious fellow, I see," cried the consul. "But really one is so annoyed with one's poor fellow-countrymen in a foreign land, I'm sure it is enough to drive one mad."

"Their distress *is* calkilated to produce that effect, Sir," said Mr. Weller; "an' I vouldn't adwise you to be too liberal to 'em, vich vos the hint given by the owerseer to the mas'er of the vorkus ven he took the three starved paupers to him. I vish you a wery good day, Sir;" —and with these words Mr. Weller departed from the consular office, followed by the astonished looks of the upright and impartial Mr. Whickford, and the forlorn stare of the subordinate Mr. Simcox.

Messieurs Brandenbergh and Peacock were not behind their time at the place of *rendez-vous*; nor were they a little delighted with the appearance of the long folds of paper which Mr. Weller waved gracefully to the wind so soon as he caught sight of them at the end of the avenue. A farther reward of two Napoleons was the affecting manner in which the young gentlemen acknowledged their gratitude towards their able friend; and as the hours were waxing on toward mid-day, and creditors on one side and coaches on the other stayed for no one's convenience, Mr. Weller took leave of Messieurs Brandenbergh and Peacock, who next evening supped at the Hotel du Nord in Boulogne, and the evening after at Long's in London.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MR. PICKWICK'S VISIT TO MR. SEPTIMUS CHITTY.—THE DRIVE TO SURENE, WITH VARIOUS EDIFYING AND AMUSING CONVERSATIONS.—MR NASSAU SIFFKIN.—MAN, THE LORD OF THE CREATION.

It was a fine day in the month of June—about three weeks after the memorable events narrated in the last chapter—that a light green britzka followed, on certain compulsory principles, a pair of somewhat lean horses down the Boulevard Mont Parnasse, and finally stopped, with the consent of the said horses and their driver, at a house which no doubt commanded from its attics a fine view of the adjacent country. The moment the equipage had thus pulled up, Mr. Weller jumped lightly from the dickey, and having opened the door of the vehicle, invited his master with a patronizing nod to alight. This adjuration was immediately complied with; the black gaiters and shoes speedily descended the steps; and as Mr. Pickwick arrived safely on the ground, the expressive countenances of Messieurs Winkle, Tupman, and Walker looked forth from the britzka, and with their smiles betokened the satisfaction that filled the breasts of their proprietors Indeed, to such an extent did Mr. Winkle's good humour extend, that he considerately advised Mr. Pickwick "not to hurry himself"—a suggestion perfectly unnecessary, as the learned man had beforehand resolved not to put himself out of the way nor into a perspiration for any one.

"Mr. Vinkle's quite right, Sir," observed the attentive Mr. Weller approvingly: "ve von't hurry no man's cattle, as ve may have a donkey of our own von o' these days."

"A very extraordinary remark, that, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick: "I must make a note of it, as one that was probably suggested by Mr. Martin's act.—But we musn't lose our time in chattering. I believe this is the house in which Mr. Chitty, the great Poet, resides?"

"Number two hundred and tventy-von—at the wery tip-top o' the house—fust door on the left-hand, vith 'Chitty' marked on the panels," elucidated Mr. Weller, as he referred to a card which he extracted from his waistcoat pocket.

Mr. Pickwick accordingly followed these directions; and after having wiped his face several times with his best India-silk handkerchief, he succeeded in arriving at the summit of the six flights which led to the quiet and cheerful apartments occupied by the votary of the Muses. This much being accomplished, Mr. Pickwick rang the front-door bell, and in process of time was confronted by an especially dirty servant-girl, whom the great man's extraordinary powers of perception immediately recognised to be of English extraction.

"Is Mr. Chitty at home, my dear?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, in a pleasing tone of voice.

"No, he ain't," was the reply. "He don't dine at home to-day, neither."

"That's very provoking!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"I dare say it is, if you've come with a good appetite," observed the girl, sulkily; "for I'm sure it's no use you're coming to lunch along with him. He ain't got no wittles his-self, scarcely; and a

many days out o' the week he lives upon air. Them poets is wonderful for livin' on that wery wholesome helement."

"Are they, indeed?" said Mr. Pickwick, musing.

"Are they not?" continued the girl, indignantly, as if her word had been doubted. "Why—blest if I don't think that they've got imagination enow to fancy they've had a good dinner, when they ain't a-had no wittles at all. Mr. Chitty's always a-talkin' of dinin' with some folks he calls the Gods, and livin' on hambrosia and nectur; or such like made dishes, wot no decent cook 'udn't meddle with. I'm sure I've looked all over the cookery-book to find out the receipts for making them things; but 'it's all wanity and wexation o' sperit.'"

"Do you mean to assert, my good girl," said the compassionate Mr. Pickwick, "that your master ever goes without a dinner?"

"Do I mean to say so?" exclaimed the really incensed servant: "do I mean to say so, indeed? Yes—I does;"—and the young lady flourished a mop, which she held in her hand, with such peculiar dexterity and skill, that Mr. Pickwick's head fortunately stood no danger of being broken.

"And, pray, where does he dine, then, my dear," continued Mr Pickwick, retreating to a short distance beyond the reach of the playful mop, "when he has no food at home?"

"Where? Why—with Duke Humphrey, to be sure," was the immediate reply.

"Oh! well—then, in that case, he is not so very badly off," observed Mr. Pickwick. "Indeed, I should question whether he were not better at his Grace's table than elsewhere."

"Come, that is a good 'un!" exclaimed the girl. "What! don't you know that dinin' with Duke Humphrey is a prowerbial way of insinivating that one doesn't dine at all? But them poets is wonderful for imagination. They fancies they has a belly-full ven there's nothink but a woid in them quarters."

"Poor fellow!" cried Mr. Pickwick, in astonishment. "And is he really so poor?"

"Oh! poor fellow, indeed!" returned the girl: "it isn't him as suffers, for he can live by hinspiration, he says; but I must starve. I don't suppose you thinks me a poet also?"

Mr. Pickwick immediately relieved the young lady of her fears on this head, and that singular specimen of the sisterhood of maids-of-all-work proceeded with her discourse.

"Oh! you should just see my lord in his flannel dressin'-gown of a mornin', valkin' up and down the lumber-closet, which he calls his 'study,' and spoutin' all kinds of gammon to his-self! Sometimes he talks about the nightingale a-tunin' her pipe; and then he says, says he, 'Betsy, my dear— what's a rhyme for *pipe?*' says he.—'*Tripe*,' says I, 'to be sure, Sir,' says I; and then he swears that I've driven a host of hideas out of his head."

"Extraordinary!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, as he scanned the lineaments of the girl's face to ascertain if he might believe her or not: but no blush betrayed itself upon the cheek of that unsophisticated female; so the note-book on a future occasion was enriched with the particulars of her discourse.

"Extr'ordinary!" observed the girl, politely saving Echo the

trouble of repeating Mr. Pickwick's exclamation: "you may say that with your own pretty mouth—"

"My good young woman!" cried Mr. Pickwick, fearful that some sinister design was concealed by this direct compliment.

"How do you know I'm a good young 'ooman, pray?" demanded the girl in a threatening manner: then suddenly changing her tone into the most bland and dulcet notes, she continued, "yes—it is, indeed, Sir, a very hot day—and you had better walk in a moment till Mr. Chitty comes home. He won't be long, I know, Sir."

This assertion was perfectly consonant with truth; for a footstep upon the stair, which had already caught the girl's ear, now fell upon the *tympanum* of Mr. Pickwick, and in another moment the head of the poet made its appearance above the landing-place. The head was followed by the body, and the body by the legs; so that in process of time an entire poet stood in the presence of the great man.

"Well—*hoc genus est*—this is kind!" exclaimed Mr. Septimus Chitty, grasping his friend's hand with considerable warmth. "But I saw Tupman and the others down below, as I returned home; so I hastened up stairs to join you."

"You saw them in a green britzka," said Mr. Pickwick, with a smile: "did you not?"

"No, I didn't," returned Mr. Chitty. "They were all in the wine shop opposite."

"Indeed, I suppose they felt thirsty," observed Mr. Pickwick. "But my servant was of course at his post?"

"He was leaning against one, if that's what you mean," said Mr. Chitty, "and watching a fight between two little boys. He assured me, as I passed, that it beat cock-fighting—*galli pugnantes*—and invited me to be umpire."

"Oh! oh!" cried the veteran traveller, his countenance assuming a stern aspect; "it is time for us to go, Chitty, my friend—you must accompany us."

"Where to?" enquired that gentleman.

"To a pleasant place, where we shall amuse ourselves and have a good dinner," explained Mr. Pickwick.

"*Vester homo sum*—I am your man," said Mr. Chitty; and having consigned a mysterious roll of papers, which Mr. Pickwick strongly suspected to be the "Creation," to his hand-maid, the poet followed his friend down stairs.

The battle between the two boys being concluded, Mr. Weller was induced to leave one post to attend to the duties of another; and Mr. Tupman, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Winkle having been fetched from the wine-shop whither they had adjourned on the suggestion of the systematic gentleman, "just to take a damp at starting," as they very properly expressed themselves, the party prepared to occupy the britzka. Mr. Walker was the first to ensconce himself in the interior thereof, an example that Mr. Chitty was about to follow, when he was somewhat unceremoniously stopped by Mr. Samuel Weller.

"Now, then, Chitty, you get out o' the shay," exclaimed that faithful functionary: "your name ain't down in the vay-bill for the inside; fust come, fust served, as the boatswain said ven the men vos brought up to be flogged."

"Sam," cried Mr. Pickwick, in an authoritative tone of voice; "let Mr. Chitty get into the vehicle immediately. I wish to enjoy Mr. Chitty's conversation during the ride."

"Vell, it is agreeable to go in good company, as the boy remarked ven his mas'er said he'd send him off vith a flea in his ear," elucidated Mr. Weller.

"Silence, Sam," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "Now, then—there' plenty of room for five inside. Chitty, are you comfortable?"

"*Omnis rectus*—all right," returned that gentleman; "so, *scinde via*—cut away, as soon as you like."

"Satisfied with this pleasing intelligence, Mr. Pickwick took his seat in the vehicle, Mr. Weller closed the door with a somewhat unnecessary degree of violence, and in the course of a few moments the horses were prevailed upon to put the equipage in motion.

"In which direction are we going?" enquired Mr. Tupman, after a short pause, during which the coachman had urged one of his steeds into a canter, and the other into a trot.

"Along the southern bank of the Seine, presently," answered Mr. Walker; "and so on to the village of Surêne. It is a part of my system to visit the coronation of the Rosiere at that place every year."

'And, pray, what is the object of the institution?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"The most virtuous and circumspect girl of the community," replied Mr. Hook Walker, "is elected queen of the festival; and on her is the crown of roses bestowed, together with a donation of three hundred francs."

"How exceedingly interesting!" observed Mr. Pickwick in the true spirit of philanthropy.

"And highly beneficial to the morals of the inhabitants of Surêne," remarked Mr. Winkle.

"I wonder whether the queen of the day is pretty, or not?" said Mr. Tupman.

"She is virtuous, Tupman—she is good," cried Mr. Hook Walker; "and that is better."

This beautiful sentiment, coming, as it did, from such lips, and prompted by such a heart, did not fail to make a considerable impression upon Mr. Walker's companions; and Mr. Chitty declared that he should envelop the idea in poetic guise the moment he returned home.

In the meantime, while the carriage was rolling gently along the road which runs parallel with the southern bank of the Seine, and while his masters and their friends were wiling away the time with rum punch and a highly interesting conversation inside, Mr. Weller, perched upon the dickey, commenced a not less amusing dialogue with the driver outside.

"I say, old feller," began the faithful valet, "them hosses o' yourn is rum uns to look at; but I des say they're right down devils to go."

"Dey de good Norman osses," returned the coachman, highly indignant at the ironical tone in which he was addressed. "Dey beat all your Inglis fine-lookin', never-workin', always-eatin' animals, *parbleu!*"

"Not unlikely," continued Sam in the same jeering tone; "but

incredoolity is my besettin' sin I can't believe nothin' I don t see:—it's my propensity, as the cricket said ven he chirrupped in the grate."

"*Comment!* you not doubt de Frenchman's vord?" exclaimed the driver, darting a terrible glance at the imperturbable Sam. "Me tell you dem osses only vant de vhip to go—go—go—avay—for ever!"

"Vell, that is rayther too good, as the nobleman's lady said to the butler, ven he put too much brandy in her grog: particlar as you ain't never ceased from volloping them hunfortunate dumb hanimals from the fust moment ve left the house. Three-miles-an-hour-'uns, I calls em," added Mr. Weller, as he gracefully suspended his left leg over the side of the dickey.

"In France de law not allow us to run over de people as is valking in de streets," remonstrated the driver, showering dark looks upon his companion, and blows upon the horses.

"Vot are you up to now vith that 'ere gammon?" cried Mr. Weller, with a contemptuous shake of the head. "Vy, ain't this the country like, and vere's the crowds of foot-passengers you so wery considerately von't run over?"

"Vary well!" returned the coachman, affecting a laugh. "But, Monsieur Vellair, you know ve must not cut up de roads, *morbleu?*"

"The roads is paved," said Sam; "and so there ain't no great chance o' spilin' them. Stones is stones—and veels on stones don't make quvite so much himpression as a seal on hot vax. So try it again, old chap, as the nobleman said to the executioner ven he didn't cut off his head at the fust blow."

"Ah! vell, me see you vary ignorant, Monsieur Vellair," said the coachman, with a long whistle; "but you ought to know vary vell, dat me not dare break chaise."

"That's vot it is, eh?" said Mr. Weller, complacently.—"Vy, von 'ud take you for a lo-gician, vith all your excuses and rigmarole ewasions. But ve are all apt to aspire, now-a-days, as the pickpocket observed to the gallows;—so that's vot you're a aimin' at, eh, old dot-and-go-von?"

"Me only repeat, Monsieur Vellair, dat me not dare go too *vite*, 'cause me break dis damn old chaise; and den de proprietor put me in de prison for de damages."

"Wery prudent you air too," said Mr. Weller, with a patronizing nod.

"Have you dem prisons in your country for gentelmen vot cannot pay dere debts?" enquired the driver by way of changing the conversation.

"I should rayther think ve had," answered Sam; "an' a blessed thing it is, too, else vot 'ud become o' the lawyers?"

The Frenchman was apparently confounded by the wide field of speculation opened to him by this remark; for he did not reply to the query; and Mr. Weller himself did not think it necessary to continue the conversation.

In a short space of time from the sudden cessation of the above highly edifying discourse, the britzka entered the village of Surêne, and speedily deposited its inmates at the door of the principal tavern or *auberge*, where to their great delight they encountered Mr. Scuttle and his amiable niece, Mrs. Weston. The latter was escorted by a

gentleman, who was introduced to Mr. Pickwick and his companions as Mr. Nassau Siffkin; and a very singular-looking person he was. His age might have been about sixty-two, but he endeavoured to make people believe that he was fast verging upon forty only. His brown surtout-coat was exceedingly tight at the waist—his boots were exceedingly narrow over the instep—his hand was exceedingly white—his hair and whiskers exceedingly well dyed—and his teeth did infinite credit to Mr. Desirabode, the dentist in the Palais Royal. As to his character, the reader may gather its peculiarities from his conversation.

"Well, this is very fortunate," said Mr. Pickwick: "the more, the merrier—you know, my dear Mrs. Weston."

"Of course you are come to see the village-coronation," said that lady: "and of course we shall all dine together afterwards?"

"Oh! dear me—may I be called old and ugly for the rest of my life, if this isn't delightful!" observed Mr. Siffkin, screwing up his lips, and appealing in a truly fascinating and finnikin manner to Mr. Pickwick.

"It is a part of our systems to enjoy ourselves, Sir," said the grave Mr. Hook Walker.

"The last time I came to Surêne," remarked Mr. Scuttle, "I was on horseback; and what do you think I did?"

"I am sure I shall never guess," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Why," continued Mr. Scuttle, "I led my nag into the *table-d'hote* room, and desired him to seat himself next to an old lady at the table, while I proceeded to the stable, where I began eating the oats, and only found out my mistake when I undertook to neigh as the ostler came to rub me down."

"Convey me henceforth straight to perdition, if that isn't the most extraordinary thing I ever heard in the whole course of my life," screamed Mr. Nassau Siffkin, in a perfect paroxysm of delight.

"So it is," coincided Mr. Pickwick. "Have you been long in France, Sir?"

"Only three days this time, Mr. Pickwick," returned the gentleman thus appealed to. "But let the winds for ever efface all traces of my eyes—"

"Vy don't ye say, 'blast them!' then, Sir?" interrupted a voice from behind, which Mr. Pickwick shrewdly suspected to belong to his faithful attendant; but when he turned to ascertain the truth of the matter, Mr. Weller looked so very innocent and unmoved beneath his master's searching glance, that no notice was taken of the occurrence.

"All traces of my eyes," continued Mr. Nassau Siffkin, "if the fashionable world didn't go into mourning when I withdrew my lustre from its sphere. And between ourselves," added Mr. Siffkin, lowering his voice, and glancing suspiciously around him, "the clerk at the *Morning Post* Office behaved very well on the occasion. He only charged me a guinea for announcing my departure, and the procrastination of my great dinner-party till my return;—if he didn't do this, may my teeth never be again called white!"

"How very handsome!" said Mr. Pickwick. "But while we are standing chattering here, we are losing the preliminaries to the day's diversion. Suppose we order dinner for five o'clock, and in the mean-

time put ourselves under the direction of our friends, Scuttle and Walker, who have been here before?"

This proposition was immediately agreed to; and Mr. Weller having requested the company, in a tolerably audible voice, "never to say *die*," the necessary commands were issued to the landlord, and the parties sallied forth in the direction of the church, whither Mr. Scuttle led them over a muddy field, which he was pleased to denominate a "short cut."

"How I wish I'd a gun here," said Mr. Winkle, drawing his right foot out of a deep hole into which he had tripped: "there ought to be capital sport about here."

"Shooting in June!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, with a look of unfeigned horror, as he espied an old cow tranquilly feeding at a little distance. "But, I say, Winkle—do you see that—that—"

"That what?" cried Mr. Winkle, casting a searching glance around, and drawing close to his friend's side.

"That bull," said Mr. Tupman. "Doesn't he seem very savage?"

"So wery savage, Sir," interrupted Mr. Weller, who had overheard this dialogue, "that I vouldn't be them butter-cups and daisies for a trifle. Blest if I don't think he'll devour 'em all!"

"I'm not afraid of English cattle," observed Mr. Winkle, "because I know them. But French bulls—"

"Is vorser than Irish vons, Sir," added Sam.

"Winkle, I'm ashamed of you," said Mr. Pickwick, sternly. "You ought to feel your own importance, Sir, and know that man is the lord of the creation. His sagacity and boundless talents have placed all other living things within his power: the largest animals become his prey as well as—"

At this moment, just as every one present was regarding the venerable orator with the deepest attention and respect, the aged cow before alluded to, made a sudden start, and set off in a smart trot towards that part of the field in which the party was walking. Mr. Pickwick was the first to perceive this strange movement; and, prompted by that sagacity and boundless talent he had just been so highly extolling, he prudently took to his heels, and never once looked behind him till he had crossed the adjacent stile, and was beyond the reach of danger. On a subsequent occasion, Mr. Chitty, in a letter to a friend thus poetically described this important event:—"As the winged lightnings dart from the clouded canopy above, when the Almighty has unbarred their adamantine gates, so did the great Pickwick run like the devil when an old cow was after him."

No sooner did Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle perceive their great leader thus practically demonstrate the truth of his positions, than they recollected their vows, which obliged them to follow whither he might lead; and with the same promptitude which he had deemed it expedient to adopt, did they also rush towards the stile, followed by the no less prudent Mr. Walker, who subsequently declared "that it was not a part of his system to be tossed by a bull at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon." Mr. Nassau Siffkin invoked the presence of every calamity if such methods of proceeding were not perfectly ridiculous; Mrs. Weston laughed as heartily as if she had been enjoying a new farce; Mr. Scuttle fancied it was a running-match, and took to his

heels with the determination of outstripping his competitors; and Mr. Samuel Weller bestowed additional interest upon the whole scene by throwing his hat up in the air a plurality of times, and catching it dexterously in one hand, while the aforesaid air was rent with the clamorous "Hurrahs!" he emitted from his capacious throat.

"May I never again aspire to the favours of the fair sex, if I am not perfectly out of breath with astonishment!" exclaimed Mr. Siffkin, when the whole party was again concentrated in one spot.

"Self-preservation is a part of every sensible man's system," said Mr. Hook Walker.

"I'm sure I didn't know what *I* was running for," observed Mr. Winkle, with considerable emphasis on the pronoun.

"And I only ran because I saw Pickwick do so," exclaimed Mr. Tupman.

"What were the stakes? Who won?" enquired Mr. Scuttle.

"It was merely a practical illustration of a self-evident proposition!" cried the charming Mrs. Weston with a sweet smile.

"Really—I was so overcome—a sudden panic," said Mr. Pickwick, somewhat confused: "but after all, man has built stiles to protect himself against savage cattle, and is therefore lord of the creation."

"An' alvays vill be so, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, "till cattle builds stiles to keep him out. Ve ain't got no hides, an' ve ain't got no tails; and tho' some on us does now and then vear horns, ve're still wery much removed from the rank of them brute-beastesses vot lives upon grass:"—and having delivered himself of this eloquent oration, Mr. Weller bestowed a perfect museum of winks and nods upon the astonished Mr. Nassau Siffkin, who requested a certain dark gentleman below to fetch him away if Sam Weller were not a most extraordinary fellow. Mr. Weller expressed his regret that he could not return the compliment; and order being now once more established in the ranks, Messieurs Scuttle and Walker resumed the command of the squadron, which passed rapidly onward in the direction of the church.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE ELECTION.—THE CONVENIENCE OF SEATS IN AN ARBOUR, AND OF AN ARBOUR IN A GARDEN.—A SONG.—AN ACCIDENT WHICH LEADS TO A SERIES OF UNPARALLELED ADVENTURES.

The village church of Surêne was thronged with gaily dressed people of every rank and condition. On one side might be seen the high-born ladies from Paris, whom gorgeous equipages had set down at the door of the sacred edifice; on the other the quiet and unassuming trades-people, who had performed the short journey from the metropolis in a *cuckoo* (a species of curiously contrived short-stage van). Here was the gay young man about town, with his mistress: there the wealthy banker from the Chaussée d' Antin with his wife. Many a young heart was there beating with anxious hope and expectation. The young girls each fancied that haply the election might terminate in favour of herself; and the young men wished for the honour of

being favoured with the rural queen's hand in the anticipated dance. The mayor, the commissary of police, the justice of the peace, and the vicar were all seated near the altar, and close to the ballot-box which was soon to decide the result of the election. Three or four Gendarmes were present to maintain order, and provide with seats those who were fortunate enough to be possessed of tickets; amongst which number were Mr. Pickwick and his several companions, Mr. Hook Walker having previously attended to that portion of the ceremony.

At about three o'clock, the election commenced; and when the ballot was examined by the above-named authorities, it was found that the choice had fallen upon Mademoiselle Pauline-Josephine-Jesu-Maria Tronquette, a tradesman's daughter of about twenty years of age. A lady of high rank presented her with the crown of roses, and the dower; and she was then led by a grand procession towards the altar, where a priest pronounced his benediction upon her head. A subscription was opened amongst the numerous visitors, in order to increase the amount of the pecuniary honours thus awarded to the happy Mademoiselle Tronquette; and Mr. Pickwick has never been heard to regret the generosity which prompted him to throw a Napoleon into the plate which she herself handed round. The sweetest smile of a very sweet girl was his reward; and the five-franc pieces of his companions rattled in quick succession upon the silver dish. We find in Mr. Winkle's note-book a *memorandum*, relative to this occasion, which induces us to believe that he was the individual to whom Mr. Hook Walker applied for the loan of the wherewith to supply his portion of the donation; and a similar entry in Mr. Pickwick's journal affords scope for the same inference with regard to Mr. Septimus Chitty.

When the collection, which amounted to about fifteen hundred francs, or sixty pounds sterling of English money, was completed, the priest ascended the *rostrum*, and proceeded to deliver a very eloquent and excellent discourse; and to Mr. Scuttle's kindness was Mr. Pickwick indebted for the slight insight he obtained into its character. It is therefore from Mr. Pickwick's note-book, that we have extracted the following brief summary of the principal topics touched upon by the reverend clergyman who officiated in the pulpit.

The priest commenced by congratulating the queen-elect upon that circumspection and good conduct which had procured for her the honours she then wore. He next besought her companions to follow her example; and proceeded to warn them against the many temptations to which they were exposed in this world. The principal temptation, he said, was Love; and it was the more dangerous, inasmuch as it came in so many questionable shapes. He observed that it was necessary to particularize the various kinds of Love to which they might yield. There was the Love arising from admiration—a very dangerous sort of Love; the Love arising from gratitude—a very suspicious sort of Love; the Love arising from continued neighbourhood—a very natural sort of Love; the Love arising from pity—a very insinuating sort of Love; the Love arising from friendship—a very bastard sort of Love; and a thousand other kinds of Love, the

distinguishing epithets of which not even the gigantic brain of a Pickwick could retain.

"Beautiful!" said Mr. Hook Walker, who had been asleep the whole time, when the discourse was brought to a conclusion.

"Excellent!" cried Mr. Winkle, unable to comprehend three words of French.

"How very affecting!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, as he wondered whether dinner was nearly ready.

"Brayvo, old chap!" whispered Mr. Weller, respectfully alluding to the clergyman. "Rayther good, that!"

"Excessively tiresome!" said Mrs. Weston to her *chaperon*.

"Let the light of heaven, and of your eyes, fair lady, desert me," returned Mr. Siffkin, "if I am not quite stupid with this discourse."

So indeed he was without it, but on that head Mrs. Weston did not consider it necessary to enlighten him.

"I suppose they will now treat us with an anthem," observed Mr. Septimus Chitty, to Mr. Pickwick. "Did you ever hear my imitation of the organ?"

Mr. Pickwick could not say that he ever had.

"Oh! indeed," observed Mr. Chitty, with a cunning smile. "I must give you a specimen after dinner; I'm certain you will be quite delighted with it."

Mr. Pickwick made rather a singular face for a man who was anticipating the enjoyment of any promised treat; but as the rural queen had by this time headed a procession which was to move from the church to the ball-room, the company left their seats, and our little party hastened to the inn where they had ordered their dinner.

"What a very pleasing ceremony," remarked Mr. Pickwick, as they issued from the church.

"Eminently interesting," acceded Mr. Hook Walker.

"Very beneficial to the morals of the young girls of the village and the neighbourhood," continued Mr. Pickwick.

"It's a pity that any-thing should ever happen to defeat the good purpose," said Mr. Walker, calmly.

"What do you mean me to infer by that observation?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, somewhat sharply.

"Only that the queen *Rosière* of last year, produced a male heir to her dower and honours in a little less than six months after her coronation," was the highly satisfactory and quiet answer.

"Accidents vill happen in the best regilated families," said Mr. Weller; "vich vos the remark made by the nobleman as had a brother hung at the Old Bailey."

"Sam," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Veil, Sir," returned that faithful follower.

"You need not join in the conversation till you are desired to do so," suggested his master.

"That's vot I call a broad hint," muttered Sam to himself, "as the gen'leman said ven they told him he'd stole the di'mond ring."

By this time the party had arrived at the inn, and in a few minutes dinner was served up, to the inexpressible delight of those who were destined to partake of it. Mr. Weller was accommodated with a

similar repast in the kitchen; and so merrily passed the hours, that the clock might have struck twelve at midnight before even Mrs. Weston would have expressed the slightest inclination to return to Paris.

It was in the garden at the back of the house, that the ever memorable conversation took place between Mr. Pickwick and Mrs. Weston. It seems that at about half-past eight o'clock, Mr. Winkle proposed to quit the room in which the party had dined, and smoke a cigar in the open air—a suggestion that was immediately agreed to by every one present, save Mr. Pickwick and the lady. Mrs. Weston accordingly assented to that gentleman's offer, to take a stroll in the garden; and although Mr. Nassau Siffkin felt the influence of the green-eyed monster, and attempted to look Mr. Pickwick through and through, the great man was glance-proof, and the widow accompanied him to the botanical territories in the rear of the tavern.

"What a beautiful evening," exclaimed Mrs. Weston, as they drew near a secluded arbour at the bottom of the garden.

"Very," said Mr. Pickwick, feeling himself quite overcome with philanthropy and wine. "And what a beautiful summer-house there appears to be here," he added after a momentary pause.

"Is there? Well—I declare, so there is," cried the fair widow, who had been admiring it for the previous five minutes.

"The weather is still rather close," observed Mr. Pickwick, looking towards the arbour with a wistful eye.

"Do you think so?" returned Mrs. Weston. "Perhaps—that is, may be the walk fatigues you?"

"I certainly think it would be more agreeable to sit down somewhere," said Mr. Pickwick.

"But where could we find a seat in this garden?" asked Mrs. Weston, hastening straight towards the summer-house.

"I really don't know," rejoined Mr. Pickwick, abstractedly conducting his fair companion into the arbour.

"Nor I," said Mrs. Weston, as she sank upon a chair in the recesses of the summer-house.

"Well—here *are* seats after all," whispered Mr. Pickwick, as he settled himself on a high stool next to his fair companion's chair.

A pause of five minutes ensued, during which Mrs. Weston looked down upon the ground, and Mr. Pickwick watched the motions of a snail that was winding its perpendicular way up a post.

"Your uncle is a very singular man, Mrs. Weston," said Mr. Pickwick, suddenly relapsing from his agreeable occupation of studying the efforts of animated nature.

"So very eccentric," observed the lady.

"One would scarcely take you for his niece," continued Mr. Pickwick, accidentally laying his right hand upon Mrs. Weston's left.

"Indeed!" said the widow, gazing timidly round.

"No, indeed," added Mr. Pickwick, gently pressing the hand which was not withdrawn.

"So, you don't think I'm like my uncle?" said Mrs. Weston, with no other idea than that of saying something.

"I do not," returned Mr. Pickwick with a sigh; for at that moment

his memory retained not the fact of Mrs. Weston's being a widow: he had a good dinner, and a couple of bottles of strong Burgundy only upon his conscience.

"Do you intend to remain long in Paris, Mr. Pickwick?" enquired the lady after another pause.

"Only as long as it is agreeable to you," murmured this most extraordinary man, the motives of whose actions invariably turned upon so important a pivot.

"Lor, Mr. Pickwick!" said the widow, returning in her confusion the pressure of that gentleman's hand.

"Mrs. Weston—adorable woman," cried the impassioned hero of these memoirs, falling, as he spoke, upon one knee and a thistle at the same time: "my feelings overpower me,—and I must now seek an explanation. That heart—that enviable heart of your's—"

"My heart, Mr. Pickwick?" sighed the lady, gently.

"Your heart," reiterated the great man, with a sentimental hiccup which not a little added to the interest of this most affecting scene: "tell me—dear Madam—it is not—oh! no, it cannot be—it is not Siffkin's?"

Mrs. Weston blushed a negative.

"And it may be Pickwick's?" continued the ardent lover.

The widow looked an affirmative.

"You, then, may suffer me to hope?" demanded the venerable traveller.

Mr. Scuttle's niece whispered an assent.

"I must make a note of your permission," said Mr. Pickwick, with that prudence and presence of mind which never deserted him.

"It can be scarcely necessary," objected the widow, with a deep blush; "and vulgar eyes may peruse your *memoranda*."

"Right—very right," said Mr. Pickwick, pressing his lips to the fair hand which he held imprisoned within his own, and rising lightly from his suppliant posture and the thistle. "I shall reveal my views and wishes to Scuttle in the course of to-morrow, and have no doubt—"

At this interesting crisis, a profane voice dared to break upon the silence of the evening; and the following song suddenly burst forth to burden the air with its measures:—

EVENING.

How gorgeously the sun is sinking
In his enamour'd Thetis' lap:
He seems the ocean to be drinking,
Before he takes his evening nap.

Upon the clouds the Moon is riding,
As if a charger she bestrode:
Through endless paths her courser guiding,
She trots along the usual road.

The stars above our heads are twinkling,
As if they pined at human woe;
Or e'en as if they had an inkling
Of all that's passing here below.

And as the voice repeated the words "here below" a number of times, with pleasing variations, and in a rich volume, Mr. Pickwick became aware that he and his fair companion could be indebted to no other than Mr. Septimus Chitty for the harmony and the interruption. They therefore prudently determined to avoid any encounter at that moment with the poet, and hastened towards the house, both not a little pleased with the confessions and avowals mutually given and received.

The horses were now harnessed to the vehicle, and every preparation was made for departure. Messieurs Pickwick, Scuttle, Siffkin, and Mrs. Weston, occupied one carriage; and Messieurs Tupman, Winkle, Chitty, and Walker, established themselves in the green britzka. Mr. Weller mounted the dickey of the latter—for once being obliged to separate for an hour from his beloved master; and the cavalcade rolled leisurely on the road which leads to Paris: but as the horses which were attached to the vehicle that bore the four first-named individuals, were of somewhat a superior order of animals, it is not to be wondered at if the green britzka were soon distanced, and its occupants unable to discern the least glimpse of its precursor ten minutes after they had both left the inn together.

As the night was dark, the driver of the first carriage crossed the river by the bridge opposite the Champs de Mars, and availed himself of the lamps which are placed at long intervals on the quay that leads from the Barrière of Passy to the Champs Elysées, while the inmates of the vehicle were all occupied in snoring to the utmost of their power, Mrs. Weston excepted. The carriage had arrived at the entrance to the Champs Elysées, and the driver was preparing to make his horses gallop in unison, when the front axle-tree broke with a desperate jerk, and the equipage rolled lightly and easily over in the middle of the road. The coachman, who escaped with only a few bruises, hastened to extricate the lady and the three gentlemen from their unpleasant predicament inside the vehicle. Fortunately no bones were broken—but bruises had been plentifully distributed amongst them; a violent concussion with the door, in particular, having entirely bunged up Mr. Nassau Siffkin's right eye.

Our travellers were all standing very miserably in the middle of the road, uncertain what course to adopt, as no vehicles were passing at that hour, and as the green britzka was pursuing its way on the other side of the river, when the door of an adjacent house was hastily thrown open, and a gentleman, bearing a lamp, and followed by his servants with lanthorns, issued from the said dwelling, and hastened to the spot. The gentleman, who was a little old fellow attired in the extreme of fashion, addressed himself with a thousand genuflexions to the discomfited party, and being answered in French by Mr. Scuttle, a short colloquy ensued between them, which ended in Mr. Scuttle's informing his friends that the strange gentleman insisted upon their accepting his hospitality for an hour, while one of his domestics obtained a hackney-coach. To this proposition there was no possibility of raising an objection: Mr. Pickwick accordingly rushed forward, expelled Mr. Siffkin from the vicinity of Mrs. Weston, and having conveyed that lady's arm through his own, proceeded boldly into the

house, in the traces of the gentleman who carried the lamp before to show the way.

The gentleman led the travellers into a spacious and well-lighted room, in which a table was spread for about fourteen or fifteen people. Two or three servants in gorgeous liveries were occupied in arranging a most succulent repast upon the board; and ten or twelve ladies were seated at one end of the apartment, chattering away as if they were as many magpies.

"Pray what are your friends' names, Sir?" asked the gentleman, who appeared to be the master of the house, in French, of Mr. Scuttle.

"This is my niece, Mrs. Weston," replied Mr. Scuttle; "that is Mr. Siffkin—and this is Mr. Pickwick."

The gentleman bowed profoundly; and at the name of Pickwick the ten ladies at the end of the room burst into a simultaneous shout of laughter, so loud and long, that Mr. Nassau Siffkin actually appealed to Mr. Scuttle to ascertain if he were awake or dreaming.

"I really don't know," answered Mr. Scuttle, somewhat alarmed himself; "but the human imagination does occasionally run riot to an extraordinary degree. The other day, having just taken a pinch of snuff, and wanting to blow my nose, I took out my pocket-handkerchief, but accidentally dropped it. Stooping to pick it up, I seized hold of the skirt of a lady's dress, wiped my nose with it, and was about to stuff in into my coat-pocket, when—what do you think? I never found out my mistake till the lady's husband came and kicked me out of the house."

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Siffkin: "may I never put another female heart to torture, if the ladies ain't all staring at Pickwick's black gaiters, and he is bowing—strike me! like a madman!"

This was indeed the case; and most exhilarating was the sight. The ladies were convulsed with laughter—Mr. Pickwick with bows—and Mrs. Weston with affright. The little old gentleman, whom one of the servants alluded to as the Doctor, speedily restored order: the ten or twelve ladies took as many seats at the supper-table—the travellers followed this example—the Doctor occupied an arm-chair at the end of the hospitable board—and the meal commenced. Two seats, however, still remained unoccupied.

In a few minutes the door opened, and an aged matron entered the room, leading by the hand one of the most lovely girls mortal ever yet beheld. She was not above eighteen—and her countenance was deadly pale: but her dark, flashing eye—her long raven locks—the admirable symmetry of her person—and the melancholy cast of her features, were calculated to make an impression even upon the most callous heart, which time could never efface.

The matron started when she saw strangers seated at the table: but the doctor made a sign—and the old lady led the lovely being to a vacant seat, and placed herself in a chair by her side. Not a word passed between them: that fair girl appeared inanimate as to every feature, save her eyes—and she seemed to eat mechanically.

A long pause ensued: there was something mysterious in all this which struck Mr. Pickwick and his companions as extraordinary, and which made them feel rather uncomfortable, they knew not why.

"I wonder whether we can have a hackney-coach," said Mr. Pick-

wick, blandly appealing to Mr. Scuttle, and desirous of breaking the unpleasant silence that prevailed.

"English!" exclaimed the hitherto inanimate girl, suddenly raising her eyes from her plate—those eyes flashed fearfully—while a deep crimson blush was spread over her cheeks and neck. Even her very bosom appeared to be suffused with that chaste hue.

The matron placed her finger to her lip, as if to impose silence; and the beautiful but mysterious being instantly relapsed into her former melancholy, listless mood, from which she did not again awake until the strangers were about to take their departure.

"I dare say we shall be enabled to get a vehicle," said Mr. Scuttle in reply to Mr. Pickwick's question. "But, God bless me! this is a very extraordinary proceeding!"

So indeed it was; for on the other side of the table, one of the ladies had seized hold of a bottle of Madeira, and, disdaining the use of a glass, was helping herself to the potent liquid through the more aboriginal and rural method of applying the mouth of the decanter to her own. She had managed to swallow about a third of the contents, when the Doctor happened to cast his eyes towards her; and then the bottle was snatched from her grasp in a moment.

But this was not all. At the same time that this instance of primitive singularity was being manifested, another young lady reached her fork across the table, and quietly purloined the cutlet which Mr. Pickwick had just conveyed to his plate; she then abstracted Mrs. Weston's bread; and was proceeding to empty the contents of Mr. Siffkin's plate into her own, when the eyes and angry gestures of the Doctor reduced her to passive obedience. An apology on the part of the said Doctor was tendered—the young lady, who had offended, began to cry—and another, in order to avenge the imagined insult offered to her friend, magnanimously emptied a decanter of water over the Doctor's bald head.

The little man rose from his chair in a deluge of liquid and a violent rage: another matronly-looking lady was called in—a secret order was given—and the three female culprits were requested to follow her to another apartment—a command they did not attempt to resist. The Doctor wiped his head and shoulders with his napkin—muttered some inaudible excuses—and continued his supper as if nothing had taken place.

"This is very singular," whispered Mr. Pickwick to Mrs. Weston.

"I am really alarmed," said that lady, uncertain what course to adopt, or what construction to put upon all she saw.

"It must be an illusion," suggested Mr. Siffkin, "or may I never again be noted for the delicacy of my waist!"

"I dare say it is," assented Mr. Scuttle. "There are more extraordinary delusions than this. Why—it was but yesterday morning, that when my niece told me to put some coals on the fire and make the tea, I emptied the tea-caddy into the grate, and filled the tea-pot from the coal-scuttle. I got my breakfast first, drank three cups, and did not discover my mistake till my niece came to pour out her tea; when she observed that it was the blackest she had ever seen."

Scarcely had Mr. Scuttle brought this anecdote to a conclusion, when one of the young ladies who remained, gave him a tolerably

severe poke on his knuckles with a sharp fork to obtain his attention, and addressed him in French as follows:—

"My dear Sir, since you will not ask me to take a glass of wine with you; and as I was very intimate with your uncle the cowherd, and your cousin the pig-merchant, I must beg of you to take a glass of wine with me."

"Only put two drops in her glass, for the love of God!" whispered the Doctor from the head of the table.

Mr. Scuttle obeyed this injunction with increased wonderment, which totally deprived him of the power of speech; and when the young lady had tasted the Madeira, she began to smile most benignantly upon all around; and by way of exhibiting her good humour the more effectually, she was proceeding to execute the last new dance upon the supper-table, when the old matron was again summoned, and the refractory fair one was borne away from the apartment.

"Are we amongst a parcel of actresses?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, gazing around him in unfeigned alarm.

Mr. Scuttle would, doubtless, have replied to this very natural query, had not a large boiled potato, propelled by the somewhat forceful hand of one of the young ladies opposite to him, effectually closed his mouth; a circumstance at which Mr. Nassau Siffkin was so intensely alarmed, that he hastened to screen himself under the table, declaring "that he wouldn't have his teeth knocked out to please any female in existence." Nor need this resolution be wondered at; for Mr. Desirabode, the dentist, had charged him forty pounds sterling for putting them in only the day before.

Things had now drawn to a crisis. The young ladies were convulsed with laughter; and the little Doctor in vain endeavoured to appease the irate Mr. Pickwick, who mounted upon his chair, placed his left hand beneath his coat-tails, flourished his right in the air, and proceeded to address his audience; forgetting—an oversight often committed by great men—that very few present understood a single word he uttered.

Fortunately for the state of affairs at that moment, one of the domestics entered the apartment, and informed Mr. Scuttle that a hackney-coach was waiting at the door. This news was communicated to Mr. Pickwick, and to Mrs. Weston—Mr. Siffkin, with some difficulty, was prevailed upon to emerge from beneath the table—and the travellers were preparing to depart, when some of the young ladies, perceiving their intentions, rushed forward and solicited to be allowed to accompany them. The scene of confusion which then took place, no pen can describe: one stout young lady clung to Mr. Pickwick's neck, and would not be removed: another attached herself to Mr. Scuttle's coat-tails; and a third clasped Mr. Siffkin so tightly round the waist that his very stays were loosened by the inordinate pressure. Mrs. Weston sank almost fainting upon the chair, from which she had risen when the coach was announced.

The matron, who attended the pale but lovely girl before alluded to, was now obliged to relinquish her fair charge for a moment, and exert her authority to establish order. Mr. Pickwick was the first whom she disembarrassed of the heavy lady that clung to him; and

no sooner was he freed from the suffocating grasp, than he found himself close by the side of the interesting creature into whose vicinity the turmoil had thrown him. A ray of joy darted across her paly features—her eyes shone with a gleam of something more than natural light—she glanced hastily around—she saw that for one moment she was unobserved—and she drew, quickly as lightning, a letter from her bosom, and placed it in Mr. Pickwick's hand, with a look of such tender appeal, a savage's heart could not have resisted it. The rapidity of the movement for an instant astonished that benevolent man: but in another he recovered his presence of mind—the lovely stranger had relapsed into her melancholy, unobserving mood—her countenance was pale and void of expression, as usual—her black bright eyes alone gave evidence of life: Mr. Pickwick felt a tear trickle down his cheek as he gazed upon her—it was all the work but of three seconds—he conveyed the letter to his pocket, and rejoined his friends, who were by this time at liberty also.

The Doctor followed his guests to the door, and helped them into the hackney-coach.

"I am bound to make a thousand apologies," said he, addressing himself to Mr. Scuttle; "and pray communicate what I say to your two friends: this lady, I perceive, understands me. The fact is, I thought my patients were more tractable—"

"What!" resumed Mrs. Weston, a ray of light flashing across her mind.

"You have guessed it," said the Doctor: "but one may as well see a mad-house as a theatre. The former you will never seek again—the latter cannot afford you so useful a lesson:"—and with these words he closed the door of the vehicle, and ordered the coachman to drive to Paris.

When Mr. Pickwick was informed of the nature of the place in which he had passed the previous hour, his ideas were instantly reflected back to the condition of the lovely girl, whose malady he had more or less divined the moment after she had given him the letter; and he resolved to lose no time in perusing a document the contents of which he suspected to be fraught with more than a common degree of interest. He, however, kept the secret and Mrs. Weston's fingers firmly locked up, the former in his own breast, and the latter in his own hand, as the vehicle rolled rapidly through the Champs Elysées.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ANOTHER RACY ANECDOTE BY MR. SAMUEL WELLER.—A VISIT TO A LEARNED PROFESSOR, AND THAT PROFESSOR'S SYSTEM OF DEMONSTRATION.—MR. COGHLAN'S MANUALS FOR TRAVELLERS ARE NOT ALWAYS EFFICIENT.

In the meantime the green britzka had pursued its comfortable and quiet way along the southern bank of the Seine. The coachman filled the air with the burden of a military song, and Mr. Weller with tobacco

smoke; one horse cantered, and the other ambled; and the four gentlemen in the interior of the vehicle all talked at once in imitation of the heated debates which frequently occur in the House of Commons.

Time accomplishes much. The carriage at length arrived at Mr. Chitty's abode on the Boulevard Parnasse; and as a matter of course Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Walker accepted the poet's invitation to ascend to his apartments and take "just one glass of cognac and water," to keep the damp air out. Mr. Walker declared that such a step was in perfect accordance with his system: the bill accordingly passed without a dissentient voice; and in two minutes they were all seated at a clean white deal table in Mr. Chitty's dining-room. The dirty English servant was then aroused from a nap in the chimney corner; and the potables, which Mr. Chitty had tendered, were soon supplied in the parlour, while Mr. Weller was accommodated with a bottle of beer in the kitchen.

In the course of a few minutes, when the conversation was becoming general, the servant girl recollected that there was a letter for her master. The missive was accordingly produced; Mr. Chitty broke it open—perused it with an eye (the reader will recollect that he could not always see with the other) of delight—and then addressed his companions as follows:—

"My dear friends, I have an opportunity of procuring you to-morrow morning the most delectable treat in existence."

Mr. Winkle was so highly delighted with this announcement, that he was compelled to swallow a whole tumbler of brandy-and-water to restrain his emotions. He then looked so exceedingly wise and sapient, that Mr. Chitty was perfectly lost in admiration at the excitement he had created.

"Yes," continued that great, but neglected genius; "to-morrow my friend Goble lectures upon craniology!"

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, as if he had been an opposition member, cavilling at the amount of the budget.

"I do, indeed," said Mr. Chitty seriously. "But—my dear friend, *Hamus Ambulator*, Hook Walker—you don't drink anything. Come, my good fellow—*scinde viâ*—cut away!"

"You can't take us, can you?" demanded Mr. Winkle, closing one eye, and looking very sagaciously with the other.

"Certainly—with great pleasure," rejoined Mr. Chitty. "I will call and fetch you and Tupman to-morrow morning at ten precisely Perhaps Pickwick will accompany us. As for our friend Walker—"

"Oh! I will just drop in and breakfast with you," said Mr. Hook Walker, addressing himself to Mr. Tupman; "and then we can go together."

Matters having been placed upon this very agreeable footing, the brandy-and-water was discussed, Mr. Chitty received the adieus of his friends, and the services of the green britzka were again put into requisition.

We will not dwell upon the arrival of Messieurs Tupman and Winkle at their own abode—nor on the surprise which they manifested when they heard the history of the adventures at the mad-house from the lips of their great leader, who nevertheless made no mention of the

letter so mysteriously entrusted to him;—nor shall we detail how Mr Walker retired to sleep in the most adjacent guard-house, as he had that morning had some dispute with his landlord relative to a certain little pecuniary matter, and was not desirous of renewing the quarrel. We shall therefore concisely state, for the behoof of our readers, that Mr. Pickwick (being desirous of devoting the morning to the perusal of the mad girl's manuscript) declined to accompany his friends to the proposed treat; that breakfast and Mr. Walker, who had taken a hasty but wholesome and refreshing wash at a neighbouring pump, made their appearance together; and that as ten o'clock sounded in the church steeples, Mr. Chitty's voice did the same in the ante-chamber.

"Have you breakfasted, Chitty?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, when the usual compliments of the morning were past.

"Thank you, my dear Sir," returned Mr. Chitty: "I don't care if I just pick a bit:—" and suiting the action to the word, he in process of time picked the bones of a fowl so clean that they seemed as if they had been blanched.

"Take an egg, now," said the good-natured Mr. Pickwick, delighted that his guests enjoyed themselves. "Sam—an egg for Mr. Chitty."

"Here is von, and a reglar trump he is too," observed Mr. Weller, as he placed the edible in question on the poet's plate. "Eggs raly is eggs now, Sir, as the American said."

"On what occasion did he make that remark, Sam?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"I'll jist tax my memory," said Mr. Weller, rubbing his head; "an' if I on'y does it as vell as the Government does to the poor vich can't afford to pay, and is starved in prison in consekvence, or dies in the vorkus, I shall do it vith raythe a good effect."

"Well, Sam, proceed," cried Mr. Pickwick, encouragingly.

"Vell, Sir," continued Mr. Weller, bestowing upon Mr. Hook Walker a patronizing wink, and a nod upon Mr. Chitty, "this is the horigin o' the story. A countryman in Kentucky, Sir, goes to a grocer, and says, 'Vot 'll you give for eggs to-day, old feller?'—'Seventeen cents,' vos the reply; 'for there has been a meetin' o' the grocers, yesterday—leastways in the arternoon, and they von't wote no higher terms'—The countryman drives away, and calls agin next week. 'Vell, Sir,' says he to the grocer, 'now vot d'ye bid for eggs?'—'On'y tvelve cents,' says the grocer, says he; 'for there's been another meetin', and them's the prices as vos unanimously chosen.'—That vouldn't do—neither: the countryman valks his lucky"—

"What is that, Sam?" cried Mr. Pickwick. "Made his fortune, I suppose?"

"Oh! no, Sir—it's on'y a fashionable phrase as is much in wogue vith members o' parli'ment, young gen'lemen about town, and sich like chaps; and it means that he vent avay," explained Mr. Weller. "But the countryman comes a third time, vithout no eggs at all. 'Have you any for sale to-day?' says the grocer, who vos quvite out.—'No,' says the countryman, 'I ha'nt: eggs raly is eggs, now.'—'Vot does all that mean?' says the grocer, says he; for he'd had a wery considerable order for eggs, and vos villin' to give any price for 'em now.—'Vy, simply this,' answers the countryman, 'that the hens

has had a meetin' too, and woted not to put their-selves to the wexation an' trouble o' layin' eggs for ten cents a dozen.' "

"And do you believe that, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, in unfeigned astonishment.

Mr. Weller pretended to be very busy in gazing out of the window at nothing; and as Mr. Pickwick did not repeat the question, no answer was given.

So soon as breakfast was cleared away, Mr. Pickwick retired to his study; and Mr. Chitty proposed that the party should set out on its way to the phrenologist's abode, which was situate in the Rue Montmartre.

"We will walk, if you please," said Mr. Septimus Chitty, investing himself with the command of the squadron: "because it's all in our road to pass through the court-yard of the *Messageries Royales*, where I want to stop for a moment."

"And what the deuce are you going to do there?" enquired Mr. Walker, who had just systematically devoured seven eggs.

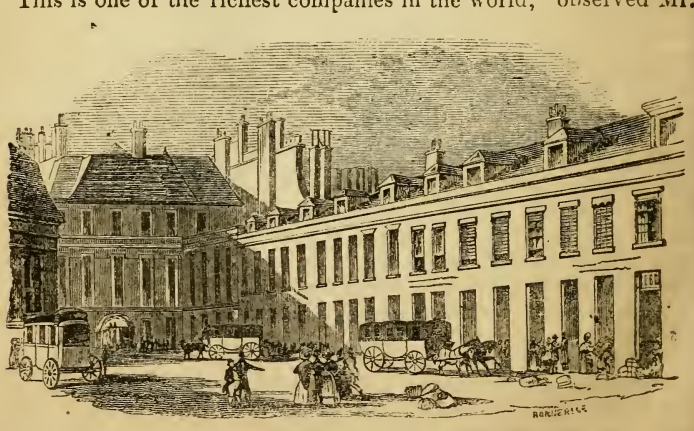
"To hire a postilion," said Mr. Chitty. "So *ignis viâ*—fire away."

"To hire a postilion!" exclaimed Messieurs Walker, Tupman, and Winkle in a breath.

"Yes," returned Mr. Chitty, gravely; "a postilion! He is to accompany us to the lectures. A postscript to my friend Goble's note requested me to do him this service on my way to his house. But what he wants with the man, I really cannot say."

Farther discussion of the matter was deemed useless: and the four gentlemen proceeded leisurely to the Rue Notre Dame des Victoires, whence they turned into the spacious court-yard of the great Diligence office.

"This is one of the richest companies in the world," observed Mr.



Chitty, alluding to the proprietors of that vast establishment. "They pay the shareholders thirty-two and a half per cent for their money originally invested."

"That's true—perfectly true," said Mr. Walker. "When the company of Laffitte and Cailliard was first formed, it was nearly ruined in six months by this one: and how do you think it was done?"

"I really can't say," said Mr. Tupman.

"Why," continued Mr. Walker, "they let all their passengers go for nothing, and thus the new company was nearly ruined. The Chamber of Deputies, however, interfered—an act was passed to regulate the various prices—and the great company ended by advancing the new one money to go on with. Such was their system!"

"How very singular," said Mr. Tupman.

While the latter part of this colloquy was taking place, Mr. Chitty had entered into conversation with a coachman whom he met in the yard, and whose services were immediately purchased with the promise of an ample remuneration. Thus reinforced, and followed by the postilion who walked up the Rue Montmartre, cracking his whip in every direction, the little party moved on, and quickly arrived at Mr. Goble's residence, which consisted of a couple of rooms on the top story of a house cheerfully situate in a small alley leading out of the above-named street.

One of these rooms had been fitted up for the occasion. The floor was nicely watered to lay the dust—three or four benches were arranged in judicious order at one end of the room—and a low stage had been erected at the other. A large screen stood upon this stage; and on the arrival of Mr. Chitty and his friends, Mr. Goble, who met them at the door, requested the postilion to step behind the said screen, and wait till his services might become necessary.

About twelve or fourteen people graced the seats above described. There was a fat old mamma with her three marriageable daughters—two giggling young ladies of five-and-forty each—three or four clerks from the adjacent newspaper offices—and five or six boys and girls of miscellaneous ages and appearances. Mr. Goble was ardently delighted with this display: he declared that it was the best audience he had ever yet had; and swore, that with such support he could make any thing of himself. Mr. Winkle was highly delighted at this piece of information; especially as he thought that Mr. Goble's views were exceedingly devoid of that bane of great men—ambition.

Mr. Goble himself now retired behind the screen, and Mr. Chitty and his companions occupied the front bench in the little row. A quarter of an hour was suffered to elapse—no one knew why: Mr. Goble, however, thought that the delay would introduce him, when he *did* appear, with the more effect. At the expiration of the fifteen minutes. three distinct blows, behind the screen, indicated in French theatrical language, instead of a bell, the commencement of the business of the morning; and, at the same time, three distinct clouds of dust arose from the stage, which the servant had omitted to sprinkle with water, and took refuge in the eyes of the company present. So soon as the whirlwind had disappeared, Mr. Goble issued from behind the screen, advanced to the front of the stage, bowed profoundly to his audience, and then seated himself at a desk conveniently placed in the middle of the platform.

Mr. Goble, professor of craniology and phrenology, was a short, thin, spare man, with long lanky black hair, small deep-set eyes, a very wide mouth, and an exceedingly shabby suit of clothes. His voice might have been harmonious, had it not resembled the sound of a bell that was cracked; and his delivery might have been applauded, if he

had not been affected with a stammering fit, which not unfrequently lasted five minutes.

Mr. Goble began by a long flourish relative to his deep researches and perseverance; and having done as much egotism as is usually performed in such cases, he proceeded to handle his subject. He said that analogy was a great proof towards the demonstration of the truth of craniology. In support of his argument he produced a cast of the skull of Captain Cook, the great navigator; and then compared a certain bump with one upon the head of a carrier-pigeon.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said Mr. Goble, with the complacent smile of one who is certain to carry conviction to every breast; "observe this remarkable coincidence. The skull of the great Cook, who discovered Otaheite and Owhyhee, bears the bump of locomotiveness. Then examine the head of this pigeon, and you will find the same convex demonstration. Captain Cook, it is true, travelled thousands of leagues—whereas this pigeon confined its journeys to within a range of twelve miles round the French capital. But there are pigeons which, as well as men, perform vast journeys; and I dare say that they also possess similar bumps."

An universal shout of applause welcomed this assertion—Mr. Goble declared it was the proudest moment of his life—and when the audience had terminated its occupation of beating the floor, &c., &c., the learned professor threw himself back gravely in his chair, and requested the postilion to stand forward.

"If any proof were wanting, ladies and gentlemen," continued Mr. Goble, stammering at every word,—"if any proof to the confirmation of my system were wanting, it could be found, ladies and gentlemen, —not in the views of the visionary theorist, nor in the speculations of the shallow philosopher—not in the minds of the specious, nor in the ravings of the naturalist—oh! no—ladies and gentlemen—I assure you, ladies and gentlemen—that—ladies and gentlemen—that is, I would assert—"

And as Mr. Goble here began to ramble more than a little, he deemed it prudent to cough, and thus recover breath and the string of his ideas, both of which he had lost. The audience, however, thought he had arrived at some great crisis, and applauded accordingly.

"Well, ladies and gentlemen," continued Mr. Goble with the most unblushing effrontery, "as I was about to say, when you honoured me with interrupting me with your valued applause—hem—hem.—as I was about to say, if any evidence were wanting to demonstrate my system—"

"*He* has a system, too, you perceive," whispered Mr. Hook Walker to Mr. Tracy Tupman.

"It would be found," pursued Mr. Goble, "on this man's head. Postilion, stand for'ard."

But as the postilion did not know the English language, he stood still instead of forward. Mr. Chitty was therefore called upon to act as interpreter; and the wondering coachman was at length induced to submit his head to the inspection of the professor.

"I find," said the learned Mr. Goble, triumphantly, "that this man's head presents the bump of locomotiveness. Now he has been employed, according to the information obtained through the medium

of my interpreter, for the last three years upon the Paris and Lille road—he has worked a diligence, gentlemen and ladies, I say during three years—three years, ladies and gentlemen—and his head indicates the travelling propensity as indisputably as did the skulls of Captain Cook and the carrier-pigeon."

Fresh applause welcomed this ingenious line of argument, and extraordinary fact; and the postilion having been restored to his retreat behind the screen, and Mr. Chitty to his bench, the learned professor wound up his discourse in the following terms:—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I was once sitting with a friend over a bottle of port-wine and a pound of filberts. Both were very old—the port was crusty—and the nuts were musty. Presently some maggots began running across the table. Of course they came from the nuts. *There* was an exemplification of the spirit of locomotiveness—for, may I die if every maggot had not a large bump upon his head in the proper place. I made this observation to my friend—I had known him about two months—and he said, 'My dear Goble,'—we were upon very intimate terms,—'you pretend to be very cunning in this particular branch; now—tell me—have I a travelling propensity, or have I not?' I examined his head, and found that he had.—'Well,' said he, 'you will swear, then, that I am inclined to locomotiveness?'—'I will,' said I.—'And you will make a bet?' said he.—'With pleasure,' said I, always ready to stick up for the science.—'Well,' said he, 'I'll bet you ten pounds that I have never done anything to justify the opinion that my *cranium* offers to view or touch a bump of locomotiveness'—'I'll take you,' said I; 'for say what you will, you *have* the bump, and you must obey it.'—'Done!' cried my friend.—'Done!' said I; and the bet was made. We shook hands upon it, and my friend was about to give me the history of his life to prove that he had never done any thing to bring him within the range prescribed, when the landlord, stepping in at the time, said, 'Oh! my fine fellow—this is better than Botany-bay cheer, ain't it?'—'What's that?' cried I.—'Oh!' exclaimed the landlord, who was half-seas-over, 'this chap has had seven year on it at Botany there.'—'Indeed,' roared I in a rapture; 'well, then—haven't I won my bet?'—The matter was conceded to me, ladies and gentlemen; and I adduce the circumstance as a fact strongly calculated to prove that craniology is a science, and that we must all obey the dictates of our own heads."

"How very ingenious," said Mr. Walker to Mr. Tupman.

"This reasoning is certainly very good," observed the gentleman thus addressed.

"And conclusive," observed Mr. Chitty. "I knew that Goble would acquit himself well; *acutus est* — he is a very sharp fellow."

"I deny that there gen'leman's *postulatum*," exclaimed a fat thick-set Englishman, with a blue coat and brass buttons, corduroy small-clothes, and top-boots. "I repeats what I said—I deny that there *postulatum*."

The audience was aghast at the interruption—the professor was speechless with rage—and the fat Englishman placed his hands upon his thighs, bent gracefully forward, rounded his arms, and stared at Mr. Goble with a look that perfectly petrified him.

"This is very improper conduct, a-hem," began the craniologist, endeavouring to recover his voice by degrees.

"Then why do you sit there and talk such confounded nonsense?" cried the individual who had roused his excitement. "I paid my franc to hear something good—I only come to obleege you, because you said, says you, 'Pray, Mr. Bellamy, don't fail,—and now you okkipy my walyable time in preaching the most confounded humbug in the world."

"My dear Mr. Bellamy!" exclaimed the professor in a pacific tone of voice.

"No—no," returned the individual thus addressed, "I'm not to be gammoned by them honied ways of your'n, Mr. Craniologist. But I'll just make one observation and then I'll a-done. You talk a wast deal about bumps, and nobs on the head; and you bring a postilion here to prove your assertions. Now I says," continued Mr. Bellamy, striking his thigh with his right hand and with exceeding violence, "that I've been a 'orse-dealer for the last twenty-two year come next Janivary, and blowed if I ever see any bumps upon the 'orse's heads as indicated *their* travelling perpensities."

"Hear, hear!" shouted a lanky gentleman in one corner of the room and in an especially dirty shirt.

"Allow me to explain," cried the professor, darting looks of the most sublime hatred at the horse-dealer.

"Explain away," said Mr. Bellamy, turning round, and winking to the audience.

"Had it been possible to have introduced a horse up five or six flights of stairs," began Mr. Goble, "I might have presented one upon this stage to illustrate my subject. But I maintain that there *are* bumps upon the heads of horses—particularly those inflicted by the handles of whips—"

The professor, at this period, was most unseasonably and shamefully interrupted by a loud vociferation of the dissyllable "gammon!" which emanated from the lips of the unceremonious Mr. Bellamy. All glances were immediately directed towards that individual, who, with the utmost calmness and presence of mind, buttoned up his breeches' pockets, gave one look of unmitigated disgust at the astounded professor, cocked his hat jauntily over his right ear, and strolled leisurely out of the room, muttering some audible maledictions against the professor's "sanguinary eyes" (as he termed that gentleman's optics in synonymous, though less genteel, language) if ever he attended his lectures again.

Mr. Tupman having now received, as he thought, a sufficient *quantum* of edification on the subject of craniology, proposed to withdraw—an offer that was most readily acceded to by his companions; and as it was nearly one of the clock, P. M., Mr. Hook Walker, declared it a part of his system to imbibe some luncheon at that hour. An adjournment to the *Rocher de Cancale*—the most celebrated *restaurant* in the world—in the Rue Mont Orgueil, was accordingly effected; and Mr. Walker undertook to order the repast.

The best Ostend oysters were speedily served up, with a couple of bottles of Sauterne; and the little party commenced a most desperate attack thereupon. At an adjacent table, there was a young English gentleman, who had entered the room a few minutes after Mr. Chitty and his friends, and who was busily occupied in conning over a manual

for travellers, written by the ingenious Mr. Francis Coghlan, and containing select phrases in French for the use of the Englishman who might be unacquainted with that language. Having muttered a certain word to himself some half-dozen times, till he thought he had acquired the proper pronunciation, he turned himself gracefully round in his chair, and exclaimed "Girkin!—Girkin!" in a pleasingly undulated and drawling tone of voice.

No one, however, returned any answer.

"Girkin!" again ejaculated the young gentleman.

Still there was no reply.

"Girkin—I say, d—n your eyes," cried the young gentleman in the deepest indignation.

"Pray, Sir, are you calling any one?" enquired Mr. Chitty, who was astonished, as well he might have been, at the singularity of the stranger's proceedings.

"Yes, Sir—I *was* calling some one, Sir," returned the young gentleman, in a menacing tone, at which Mr. Winkle turned desperately pale. "I wanted the waiter—Sir—and this book here, Sir, says you must call 'Girkin,' Sir."

Mr. Chitty could not disguise a smile as he said, "I beg you a thousand pardons, Sir, but it is '*Garçon*,' that you must call."

"Thank you, Sir," exclaimed the young gentleman.—"Garsoon!" he roared at the top of his voice; and not inconsiderable was his delight when the being thus adjured made his appearance. The waiter was a tall, thin, sallow-faced individual—with long wiry black hair, standing bolt upright on his head—a very clean white apron, and a dark blue jacket.

"Well, I think I shall get on in my French, after all," said the young gentleman, complacently appealing to Mr. Chitty.

"Oh! yes—I think so too," said Mr. Winkle, desirous of obtaining the irritable young gentleman's good opinion.

"Garsoon," continued the young gentleman.

"Monsieur," said the waiter.

"*Apportez-moi*," began the young gentleman, again consulting his book,—"a—what the devil is it now?—a—a—a bully!"

Mr. Winkle immediately fancied that the young gentleman meditated a desperate attack upon him and his party, and that he wanted to obtain the assistance of a practised hand before he began: Mr. Winkle was accordingly about to make for the door before the bully arrived, when Mr. Chitty again interfered to arrange matters to general satisfaction.

"I think it is a piece of *bouilli* that you require, Sir—is it not?" said the poet, whose great genius had in a moment penetrated through the mists of ambiguity in which every one else was involved.

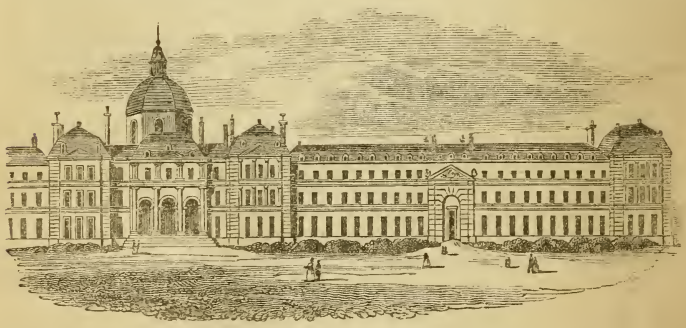
"Yes—bully—to be sure," exclaimed the young gentleman very fiercely.

The behest of the stranger was forthwith exposed to the waiter, and Mr. Winkle was relieved of the momentary fears that had seized upon him. "I thought it would have been very odd," said he to himself, as the mutton-cutlets, which Mr. Walker had ordered, were placed upon the table,—"I thought it would have been very odd, if a man had come to a coffee-house with the intention of thrashing four inno-

cent people, and because he did not fancy himself strong enough to do it, was going to send out and hire a bully to help him."

The good nature of Mr. Chitty was now put to a severe test. The young gentleman was desirous of tasting a variety of dishes—and the task of ordering them invariably fell upon Mr. Chitty. This circumstance was a considerable inducement to cut short the luncheon as much as possible: the bill was accordingly called for and paid by Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle; and the young gentleman was left to shift for himself, which he most likely did as well as he could.

In the meantime, what had been the occupation of the immortal Pickwick? No sooner had his friends departed, than this great man extracted the mysterious letter from the chest of drawers in which he had carefully stowed it beneath a couple of pairs of his own unmentionables, and cautiously broke the seal. He then unfolded the envelop, and found that it enclosed two sheets of letter-paper written very closely upon in a particularly fine female hand. An exquisite pencil-drawing of an extensive edifice covered a piece of card-board which fell from between the sheets of manuscript. Mr. Pickwick examined it long and critically, and at once perceived that it exhibited a considerable degree of talent. Beneath it was the name of the original of the design:—that original was the Salpetriere, a portion of



which vast building is made into a receptacle for the insane.

With a heavy heart Mr. Pickwick laid aside the drawing, and applied himself to a perusal of the manuscripts which he held in his hand. The contents of those mysterious pages told the following sad and heart-rending history, during the perusal of which the tear of sympathy frequently rolled down the cheeks of our venerable old friend, and dropped upon that page where doubtless the fountain of the writer's grief had already been poured forth in profusion.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE SELF-DEVOTED.—A TALE.

Part I.

THE FAMILY CURSE.—THE LOVERS.—THE AVOWAL.—RESOLUTION.—DEPARTURE.

Madness! thou hurricane of the passions and the feelings, into which the deluded imagination is plunged;—Madness! thou parent of suicide, of violent death, of misery, and of woe—how terrible a scourge art thou! Madness! at one moment thy votaries, led on by every brilliant and sanguine hope, ascend to the seventh heaven of joy and delight; and in the next, they are plunged, under the influence of the same illusions, into the deepest hell of despair! As the worm preys upon the cold corse that is consigned to the grave, so does madness gnaw at the heart; and as the one destroys the physical lineaments of its victim, so does the other abrogate all those moral characteristics and features which ennoble the soul of man! Madness! most baleful —most dreaded instrument of the wrath of a vindictive heaven—how terrible art thou!

The calm sea of July is like the mind of the sane and rational man, on which float thousands of ideas in regularity and order, under the guidance of an intelligence that knows full well the guardian pilot's duty; but the boisterous ocean of winter, when December's bleak winds impel the vessels, on a stormy sea, in wild confusion to dash against each other, and when the guidance of intelligence no longer directs the hand of a cautious pilot, may be but too well likened, in its dark and turbulent commotion, to the unsettled state of the mind of the mad one!

Madness! thou art not like thy sister plagues, which issued coevally from the box of Pandora; for thou art too jealous—too suspicious of thyself to admit of self-contemplation! Thou blindest the eyes of thy victims to truth: thy servitors are delusion, deceit, and falsehood. Oh! madness—how terrible a scourge art thou!

But to see thee approach—to know that thou hast cast thy horrible spells around the hearts of our ancestors—to feel that time is only maturing the germinations of thy poisonous influence as it ripens the fruits of the earth—to be aware that thou hast marked us as thy prey, of which thou wilt not be disappointed—and to perceive thy approach, gradual but sure, as the flight of years—Oh! this is terrible indeed! And all this have I felt—for my grandfather and my grandmother yielded up the ghost, with foam at the mouth, writhing in every limb, uttering blasphemies, and howling curses against the omnipotence of heaven! And my father committed suicide to avoid the horrid ban which was attached to his race—and my mother (for they both came from the same stock—they were first-cousins) was conveyed to a madhouse at the same moment which saw the black hearse, with its waving plumes, depart from our abode, containing the last remains of my self-slain sire. Oh! all this is terrible to reflect upon—and yet, it is true

—true as the fact of man's existence—true as the reality of his abundant misery!

And around me there were aunts—and uncles—and cousins innumerable; of whom it was said, "Alas! poor creature—he or she has shown symptoms of the family misfortune!" And then I was told in a few days, that the relative thus alluded to, had gone mad like the rest! Thus my thoughts—my actions—my dreams—my pursuits, had all reference to the accursed fear that I should soon follow the same path which was so frequently trodden by denizens of my own family. Maddening—maddening was this state of existence—maddening by day—maddening by night—maddening—maddening!

By day! O yes—the very shadows of the green trees, as I walked in the garden or the grove—seemed horrid forms distorted into shapes of mockery and unholiness. The rays of the sun appeared to operate upon my brain, and rob it of all its moisture. The busy scenes that were enacting around me seemed all founded upon the principles of madness. Even in sacred places—in churches—the celestial music, the anthem, the voices of the choristers, only formed a strange jargon which resembled the gibberish of insanity. Music was fraught with the melancholy of madness—silence with the loneliness—noise with the distraction—society with the confusion—solitude with the dread of that lingering—ever present—constant thought—madness!

And by night! Heavens—how acutely was the dread of becoming mad felt by night! The shadows of darkness were distorted by a feverish imagination into appalling shapes—dreaded apparitions hovered around my bed—my night-gear was a winding-sheet—my couch a coffin—my curtains funereal drapery. Reflection was so acute during the silence of the night, that thought was a species of physical—it was more than a moral—pain: and, should a storm arise, the artillery of heaven seemed to carry the violence of a mad deity upon its wing.

I was the only daughter of those parents whose fate I before alluded to. At the age of fifteen I was residing with an aunt, in one of the most beautiful parts of Kent, not many miles distant from the ancient city of Canterbury. My relative was not in affluent circumstances—she, however, possessed a competency—for her husband, in the midst of the most flourishing mercantile transactions, had suddenly manifested symptoms of an aberration of the intellects—and *he* also died in a mad-house!

In the vicinity of my aunt's abode dwelt a rich country gentleman, who had an only son. One afternoon, as my relative and myself were seated in the little garden opposite our modest dwelling, a handsome young man on horseback rode up to the gate, and requested to be favoured with something to quench his thirst. Never had I beheld such dark black eyes before—such long curling hair—such a sweet expression of countenance—and, withal, such a manly bearing, as that young man possessed. His voice was soft and penetrating—his manners fascinating and agreeable—and his address courteous and respectful. At the very first moment that I saw him, he made a deep impression upon my mind.

The wine-and-water which my aunt proffered him, was accepted with thanks; and having drank it, he took his leave and was soon out of sight.

"That is the 'Squire's son," said my aunt.

"What! is that young Mr. Melville?" enquired I.

"John Melville is his name," returned my aunt; "and if report speak truth, at the death of his father he will be one of the richest commoners in England."

I knew not why, but my heart sank within me, as my aunt uttered these words.

"Heavens! Eliza, what is the matter with you? are you unwell?" demanded my affectionate guardian, who had, doubtless, perceived that my cheek was pale.

I made some hurried reply, which however satisfied her; and ran to my own chamber, a prey to feelings the precise nature of which I could not understand: and a shudder crept across me—such a shudder as one feels when entering the abode of death, alone and at midnight—for I thought within myself, "O God! can this be the prelude of madness?"

In a few days Melville called again at the house, without any ostensible motive. He, however, paid particular attention to me, and once or twice regarded me with a peculiar expression of admiration—melancholy—and tenderness. These minute details are too well graven upon my mind ever to be obliterated.

To be brief—time wore away—John Melville was now a frequent visitor at my aunt's house; and his attentions to me speedily became too pointed to remain any longer equivocal. Of course my aunt encouraged his addresses to her niece; for she knew that his intentions were honourable; and I—unhappy girl that I am!—received his vows with reciprocal passion. Oh! how sweet were those moments—moments of innocent joy and bliss never to be forgotten—moments which passed like a delicious dream, from the lulling and narcotic influence of which the sleeper is doomed to be speedily awakened to terrible realities!

One evening, John Melville and myself were seated in the garden—my aunt was working in the parlour—and, for the first time, my lover and I were alone together.

"Oh! my dearest Eliza," said Melville, "how long have I watched for this opportunity to throw myself at your feet, and hear my fate pronounced by your own mouth. Tell me—Eliza—tell me—have not my attentions made some impression upon your young heart?"

I wept—I know not why—but I was still happy.

"Speak, Eliza," continued Melville: "can you be indifferent to my passion—to my love?"

"Indifferent—oh! no," said I. "But your father?"

"I am of age—I am my own master," returned the impassionate young man. "And all that I covet in this world, Eliza, is your love."

At that moment a terrible reminiscence flashed across my brain—terrible as the gust of the whirlwind over the feeble flower!

"Never—oh! never—never!" cried I, in an accent so wild—so miserable, that it seemed to petrifiy the heart of my admirer.

He remained speechless and thunderstruck for some time.

"Never!" he exclaimed after a long—long pause. "Never!" he ejaculated mechanically. "Oh! wherefore that reply?" and he fell

at my feet, seized my hand, and bathed it with his tears, while my own fell plentifully. "Oh! Eliza," continued Melville, in an imploring tone of voice; "for the love of the great God who beholds us now, retract that dreadful fiat! I will love you, Eliza—I will cherish you—oh! how fondly will I love you—and all I have shall be yours—and with you I shall alone hope for bliss!"

"Never—never," was all I could give utterance to.

John Melville sobbed like a child: the most incorrigible sceptic could not doubt his love: but circumstances, the most terrible—the most peremptory, had placed an inseparable barrier between the hymeneal altar and myself.

"John," said I, so soon as I had sufficiently recovered my presence of mind as to be enabled to address him, "I love you in return, Oh! God only knows how fondly!"

"Eliza—Eliza!" cried he: "then wherefore this cruelty?"

"Because," continued I firmly, "there is a terrible fatality attached to my family, which none have yet avoided—which will, or must, sooner or later, include me within the category of its victims—which would descend to my children, were I base enough to espouse him I love, and entail so deadly a malady upon his innocent offspring—"

"Consumption!" said he in a hasty tone of voice: then gazing steadily on my countenance for some moments, he ejaculated, "Oh! no—Eliza, the traces of that terrible scourge are not to be found in the lineaments of your fair face!"

"Alas! would that it were consumption!" said I with a bitter smile: "at least in the hour of death, consciousness and sense would remain!"

"You speak in enigmas, Eliza," said Melville. "What is the terrible bugbear that alarms thee, dear girl?"

And as if he thought that some foolish superstition was the object of my fear, he again seated himself by my side, took my hand, and, gazing fondly upon me, awaited my reply.

"John," I began, after a moment's consideration, "I tell you that I never can become your wife. Do you think that the only legacy—the only dower I can bring a fond husband shall be a curse—a ban—a plague more baneful to his children than the garment of Dejanira? Oh! no—never—never!"

"In the name of every thing sacred explain yourself!" exclaimed Melville, now really alarmed by the earnestness of my manner.

"And then—fly—shun me," said I bitterly.

"Speak—Oh! speak!" urged Melville. "There is now an unnatural brilliancy in your eyes, Eliza, which alarms me. And yet it is not the glare of incipient consumption!"

"No—but it is a sign of—" I began, shuddering as I spoke.

"Of what? leave me not in suspense!" said he, hastily.

"Of madness!" cried I, my bosom convulsively heaving, as I gave vent to the terrible secret, like the throes of the mountain when it vomits the burning lava from its lips.

Melville hid his face in his hands—he now too well comprehended the nature of the dreadful disclosure I had made—and I felt that the exertion of making it would in reality accelerate the approach of that which I so much dreaded.

"Madness!" he cried, raising his head, and looking intently at me. "Madness!" he repeated.

"Madness!" I replied with awful composure: "all my family —my parents—my relatives have died of it, or in the fear of it. The unnatural lustre you observed in my eyes, is the beginning of *my* madness!"

And having uttered these words, I suddenly rose, retreated to my chamber, and having locked the door, fell upon my knees to breathe a prayer to heaven for the welfare of the young heart I had just rendered desolate and forlorn.

As soon as I knew that Melville, who had in vain demanded another interview, was departed, I sent for my aunt, and candidly confessed to her all that had passed. The poor creature, although she could not do otherwise than applaud the conduct of her niece throughout the trial to which I had been subjected, was nevertheless deeply distressed at the sudden blight which all her fond hopes relative to my welfare had received. She however concealed her own sorrows, and endeavoured to diminish mine.

"We must leave England, my dear aunt," said I, firmly.

"And wherefore?" exclaimed she.

"Because, my dear aunt," said I in a decided tone of voice, "that young man loves me, and, in his generous affection, is capable of daring every thing to make me his bride. And I should die did I see children spring from our union—Oh! that would accelerate my madness—because I should have wantonly entailed a hereditary curse upon an innocent race of beings. My dear aunt—let us hasten and depart."

It was necessary for my happiness that this measure should be promptly executed. A hasty note apprized the unhappy Melville of my determination to quit the neighbourhood, and never see him more; and in a day or two, my aunt and I were on our road to Paris, with the hope of finding, in the gaieties of that unrivalled metropolis, some distraction from the sorrows that had oppressed us.

For some time change of scene and the diversions of the French capital helped to win my mind from perpetually brooding over the cause of my sorrows. But at length a settled melancholy usurped the place of gaiety—and I became a prey to the darkest and most hopeless despair. I loved—and was beloved again—and yet my union with him, who would have given worlds to espouse me, was impossible. Then, in the moments of my most profound grief, would I demand of heaven wherefore I was thus persecuted?

One morning I took up an English newspaper, and the first paragraph that struck my eyes was the following:—

"The mysterious disappearance of Mr. John Melville, the only son and heir of the wealthy commoner of Kent, has given rise to the most alarming suspicions. By a memorandum-book which the young gentleman accidentally (it is supposed) left in a desk in his bed-chamber, it appears that he was the victim of a disappointed passion: and other circumstances have led to the fear that he has destroyed himself. His aged father is in a state more easily conceived than described!"

My brain whirled as I read this terrible statement; and the idea

that I had caused—though indirectly—the death of him who would willingly have given his life to save mine, was maddening in the extreme. My poor aunt trembled for my reason, and did every thing in her power to console me. But, alas! a malignant fever seized upon her—its inroads were rapid as they were fatal—and in a few days she was consigned to the tomb!

And there was I left—alone—in a foreign land—without a relative—without a friend. And I saw others happy in their domestic circles—and I heard of felicitous marriages—and I was an orphan—and alone! Oh! then all the misery of my wretched position was most acutely felt.

A dangerous illness overtook me—and I was confined to my bed. I remember seeing the physicians enter my chamber, examine my pulse, shake their heads, and retreat to the farther end of the room, and consult in whispers. I remember that my head was shaved—Oh! this I remember—and I knew that I was going mad. And then a species of terrible resignation—or rather, absolute indifference, took possession of me—and I said within myself, "The last glow of reason is fast expiring!"

From that moment I recollect nothing until I was again convalescent.

I awoke—as it were from a long, long sleep—and from a sad, sad dream—and my bed was surrounded by strangers.

"Hush!" said an elderly lady, stepping forward and putting her fore-finger to her lips. "Repose yourself a little, my dear child—and you will soon be well."

"I have been very ill—have I not?" was my first enquiry.

"Very—but you will soon be well," answered a gentleman in black apparel. He was a physician.

"Has my illness been long?" demanded I, endeavouring to separate the vague from the certain ideas which flitted across my brain, and ravel together a consecutive chain of events.

"Seven months," replied the elderly female whom I subsequently found to be my nurse.

"Ah!" said I, a strange thought suddenly striking me: and then a sentiment of cunning immediately prompted me to appear as calm and tranquil as possible.

To effect this important aim, the greatest exertions and nerve were necessary: I was however successful in my endeavours; and in a few days was enabled to remove from the place where I was then located to apartments which my nurse chose for me at Saint Germain-en-laye. The noise and bustle of Paris were deemed uncongenial with the existing state of my mind.

And, when I was once more my own mistress, the truth of all that passed, and which I had more or less surmised, was gradually broken to me; and I found, as I had suspected, that I had been the inmate of a madhouse! For seven long months had I raved in the Salpetriere: but, Oh! what strange things had taken place within those same walls, during my unconsciousness of all that was passing around me!

Let me here pause for a moment, ere I detail the almost incredible events which so materilaly interested my unhappy self!

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SELF-DEVOTED.—A TALE

Part II.

THE NOBLE SACRIFICE OF THE SELF-DEVOTED.—THE SUPPLICATIONS OF A FATHER.—THE CHURCH OF ST. ETIENNE DU MONT.—SEQUEL.

It appears that when John Melville heard of the departure of myself and aunt from England, he was plunged into a state of the deepest and darkest despair. He at one time raved as if he were mad—and at another sank into a profound and melancholy reverie. Thus about a month passed away without affording comfort or consolation to the lacerated bosom of John Melville.

At length he suspected—or else was informed—that we were in Paris; and he hastened to that city. But the seclusion in which we lived precluded the possibility of his speedily discovering the place of our abode; and this state of doubt and uncertainty only irritated the more an already agitated frame. But after the most persevering search and the most unintermitted pursuit, Melville discovered that my aunt was dead, and that I was in one of the mad cells of the Salpetriere!

Volumes could not describe the anguish he must have felt when his endeavours were thus crowned with so sad and sorrowful a success.

It was in vain that he endeavoured to obtain access to me: all admittance to those who were in such a state of delirium as myself, was rigorously refused; and John Melville was reduced to the last extremity of despair. At that crisis he conceived a terrible project—a plan which only the most sincere affection could have suggested—a scheme which only the most adventurous of men could have dared to carry into execution. Alas! too faithful to her who had been compelled to desert and sever herself from him, *he* affected that madness which in reality possessed *her;* and so admirably did he imitate the ways of the insane, that he succeeded in causing himself to be consigned to that living tomb whither it was his chief object to penetrate.

But Oh! how can I ever detail the sad—the terrible result to this miserable scheme? Melville, although in the possession of his perfect senses, dwelt amidst madness—gazed on naught but madness—heard no other language than that of madness—felt no sympathies but those of madness—the unvarying scene in which he moved, was one of madness! Madness had him in its grasp—madness followed his steps—madness was his constant attendant. He went about the gloomy building, followed, and preceded, and surrounded on all sides, by his faithful companion, Madness! Like no other companion is madness—like no other comrade: it waits not upon its associates in the reality of terror, but in the horrors of fiction and delusion.

Thus madness was his unwearied companion; and he soon learnt the peculiarities, the eccentricities, the wildness, and the contortions of madness. His brain was soon filled with strange images—his range of vision embraced a world of unearthly and unnatural figures—his dreams were peopled with terrible beings—phantoms of all shapes haunted his couch, followed his footsteps, waited upon his meals, lulled him to rest and woke him in the morning. Reason tottered upon

ner throne—sense gave way before the hurricane of strange and wild fancies which seized upon his imagination—his brain whirled— and he became a madman!

And then, instead of breathing sighs and vows of love to the midnight breeze from his dull lattice, he uttered blasphemies, maledictions, and curses. His wild howlings even alarmed the very children of Madness—that universal mother in our sad department of the Salpetriere —themselves; and in order to prevent him from laying violent hands upon himself, he was manacled and bound to his couch.

His father, who had long been inconsolable for his loss, set out in pursuit of his son, whom many believed to have committed suicide: but the old man clung to a faint hope, as the wretch, precipitated from the Tarpeian rock, would have striven to snatch at any bush or bramble that grew from the craggy side, to break his fall. The aged parent, in the decline of his years, with the snows of sixty winters upon his venerable head, and with the experience of sixty years of happiness to teach him to feel the more acutely a few weeks of misery, —that aged man set out to trace his son, and once more clasp his much-loved offspring in his arms. He was rich—and he lavished his gold profusely and freely to obtain the information he so much sought after: he despatched messengers to the principal cities in Europe; and he himself remained in Paris to await tidings of his son.

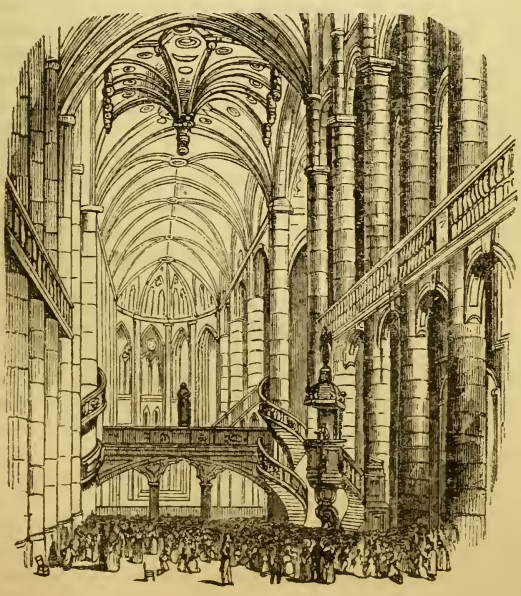
And when he had spent more than half his fortune in the pursuit of his object, and when four or five months had passed away in the prosecution of his research, he learnt that he had all the while been near his son—that his son had not sought any of the cities to which the messengers were despatched—but that his son—his heir—his only earthly joy—his son, John Melville, was confined in a mad-house!

To the Salpetriere did the old man hasten; and when he was shown into the presence of his son, a sudden gleam of intelligence flashed across the brain of the maniac—he gazed long and wistfully upon the sorrowful countenance of his father—tears ran down his cheeks—he sobbed like a child—and the incipient dawn of returning reason speedily animated his countenance. In a few hours his manacles were taken off—he threw himself into the arms of his sire—and even spoke with the coherence of sanity. He then lay down to rest, and sank into a deep, deep sleep.

An eminent physician—one of the most celebrated in Paris—was immediately summoned by the happy father, whose heart now beat high with hope; and having listened with the most profound attention to all the circumstances of the case, the medical adviser recommended the transportation of the patient to his father's abode, so that, when he should awake, he might not find himself still in a tenement which would recal a thousand horrors to his mind. This counsel was immediately followed: John Melville was removed to the hotel in which his parent resided; and when he was aroused from the species of trance into which he had fallen, the powers of intelligence had entirely triumphed over the machinations of the deadly enemy, beneath whose influence they had so long succumbed. The advice of the physician was proved to be judicious in the extreme; and it was only when the mind of the young self-devoted victim was more or less prepared to receive the intelligence, that the assemblage of his ideas into one focus made him aware of a portion of the past.

The singularity of the story soon caused it to be bruited abroad; and it reached my ears with the additional news, that the happy father and his now convalescent son were making the most diligent search after her who had caused all the misery—however innocently—which had occurred. Destiny appeared to have decided that I should espouse John Melville—and conscience pointed out to me the horrors of linking the fates of two individuals like us together. But all compunction, all hesitation vanished on my part, when I saw an old man at my feet, and a lover by my side, imploring me to renounce my stern resolves, and not irritate by a refusal the already shattered nerves of my admirer. What can I say to justify my conduct? what shall I plead in extenuation of my weakness? Did I yield to the force of my own love? Oh! no—else had I succumbed months before, and thus averted a period of suffering and of horror from us both. But I gave way, when that old man, with his long white hair, knelt at my feet,—when his son's tears trickled upon my hands,—when I marked the ravages which misery had made on the countenance of the one, and madness on that of the latter,—and when I pondered on the results of a refusal, I acceded to the solicitations of the suppliants, and consented to become the bride of John Melville.

We were married in the magnificent chapel of the British Ambassador's hotel, by the chaplain to the embassy, in the Protestant faith, which was the creed professed by my husband; and the ceremony, to suit my own religious notions, was afterwards celebrated in the church of Saint Etienne du Mont. The bridal was simple and devoid



of all pomp and useless ostentation: the splendour of the edifice in which it was performed was its only ornament. And truly never did

mortal eyes gaze on so grand and solemn a scene as the choir of the French Church illuminated at night to celebrate our wedding. The stone screen and the reliquary of the high altar were tinged with a species of yellow lustre; and the paintings of the windows shone resplendently to the glare of the numerous wax-lights placed around. It was a scene of Gothic grandeur—solemn—impressive—and dispiriting. The pealing of the organ seemed to sound the knell of my felicity—the voice of the priest appeared to be a summons from the dead calling me to the tomb!

I know not whether Melville felt the same oppression as myself; but, methought, that as the light fell upon his countenance, I had seldom seen it so ashy pale—so cadaverous—so unearthly. And his eyes were bright as meteors—and his large dark whiskers and curling black locks only served to make the pallor of his face the more remarkable by contrast. But his hand did not tremble as he led me from the hallowed building to the carriage which waited for us outside.

Weeks flew away, and we both partially recovered our equanimity of disposition. The old gentleman urged us to return to England; but we preferred remaining in the city where we had suffered so much; and this idiosyncrasy on our part was as strenuously persisted in, as it was vehemently combatted by my father-in-law. O fatal resolution! for, had we adopted the advice of one who had nought but our interests at heart, we might have ceased to ponder almost incessantly upon that which we had passed through:—change of scene, and the bustle attendant upon travelling, might have absorbed in their excitement all other feelings and reminiscences which we clung to, bitter as they were; and an absence from the localities which perpetually reminded us of our late distress, might have for ever established our happiness upon a certain foundation.

Alas! what perverse and strange creatures are we! Did my beloved husband and myself walk abroad, alone together, we invariably directed our steps, mechanically as it were, towards the Salpetriere; and as we contemplated the gloomy building within whose walls we had raved but a few months previously, we exchanged looks of unutterable horror, which told each other more than a thousand verbal utterances of our feelings, or a thousand pages of recorded sentiments.

When alone in our chamber, our conversation turned upon the particulars of the preceding year. And yet we tasted deeply of the cup of happiness—but of a species of happiness which it would be impossible to explain—because it was formed by the peculiarity of our situations—because it was dependent upon a terrible contigency—and because we knew so well how to sympathize with each other, as if Destiny had intended to join our hands together, and work out its aims by a series of the most horrible sufferings and torments.

We had not been married six months, when Melville's father died, leaving his affairs in the greatest possible disorder—the consequence of his protracted absence from England, and the villany of a solicitor in whom he had placed too much confidence. We were therefore compelled, so soon as the rites of sepulture were performed, and the remains of the good old man were consigned to the earth, to hasten to England, and investigate the state of the embarrassed fortunes of the

deceased. A few months were sufficient to arrange all those pecuniary matters; but instead of finding himself the heir to many—many thousands a-year, my husband's income was reduced to a few hundreds.

This circumstance preyed deeply upon his mind. He was compelled to dispose of the old family mansion and his broad lands; and, with an almost broken heart, he returned with me to France. From that period smiles forsook his lips—a deep melancholy seized upon him—he more than ever reverted to the horrible malady which had compelled him to become, instead of a voluntary, an involuntary inmate of the Salpetriere; and even my attentions failed sometimes in abstracting his mind from so severe a contemplation of the past.

It was with anxiety the most acute, and distress the most poignant, that I perceived my husband—my adored husband, who had passed through so much for me—gradually sinking into a melancholy so profound, that I foresaw nothing but the most horrible consequences. One morning I heard him pacing his dressing-room with unusual agitation—muttering to himself strange threats—and reproaching heaven for his misfortunes. A terrible idea flitted across my brain. "Could he meditate suicide?" thought I; and in one moment I was at his feet. He held a loaded pistol in his hand—and on the table was a letter addressed to me!

How I survived the terrible scene which ensued, I know not. My first impulse was to snatch the deadly instrument of death from his grasp—my second to clasp his knees and implore him to live, even if it were only for my sake! But at that moment ceased all consciousness of unhappiness on the part of my husband: he laughed wildly—then wept aloud—then laughed again—and, Oh! it was a fearful laugh!—and then he danced about the room, chaunting the burden of a favourite song which he had loved in the days of his early youth.

O Madness! thou hurricane of the passions and the feelings, into which the deluded imagination is plunged;—Madness! thou parent of suicide, of violent death, of misery, and of woe—how terrible a scourge art thou!

Thus with one blow all my dearest and fondest hopes were destroyed! my husband was conveyed to a private asylum a few leagues from Paris; and in that dwelling he abides *now*. Haply, had I resisted the supplications of himself and his father, all this would have been avoided: it is my fault—my fault—and only my fault. I am the criminal—I am the weak one who suffered her selfish feelings to triumph over her views of rectitude and determination: it is I who have consigned a fond husband to a mad-house—Oh! it is I—it is I!

But my punishment, self-inflicted, shall be terrible. So long as he, whom I adore, remains within the sad abode to which I have sent him, and to which none may enter, on account of the grievousness of his malady—for those whom he once most loved, he now holds in abhorrence;—Oh! so long as *he* endures the penalty of a too fervent and fatal love, will I submit myself to the same dreaded fate. And the history of my misdeed shall be published to the world—Oh! how my brain wanders—and it shall serve as a fearful lesson to those who,

afflicted with any family curse, dare venture to entail its consequences —Oh! that a sufficiency of reason may be left for me to write the remainder of this sad warning—but, no—I feel—

Here terminated this terrible tale; and the manuscript fell from Mr. Pickwick's hand, as his eyes glanced over the unfinished sentence which seemed to prognosticate such terrible consequences to the fair but unhappy writer. Tears trickled down the cheeks of our venerable friend as he pondered over this history of blasted happiness and defeated love—of the overthrow of all the felicity which reciprocal affection might have entailed upon a fond pair—and of the consignment of two innocent beings to asylums of wretchedness and despair.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOW MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM, ALIAS MR. WILLIAM SUGDEN, APPLIES TO BE WHITEWASHED AT THE INSOLVENT DEBTORS' COURT, PORTUGAL STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.—MESSIEURS STICKEMIN AND NAGSFLESH OPPOSE HIM.

"LETTER, Sir," said Mr. Weller, one morning to Mr. Pickwick, as that gentleman was discussing politics and buttered toast with his two friends at the breakfast-table.

"How much is it, Sam?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, extracting a gold coin from his pocket. "Well, here's a sovereign, I declare: I really took it for a Napoleon."

"At all events, it ain't an affliction, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, "although they does call 'em sufferins. But wouldn't it be a good thing for the poor if it rained such afflictions as them there?"

"You are right, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, returning to the toast with that sort of appetite, which is a relish bestowed upon the indigent portion of the community that they may like what they eat, while it is seldom enjoyed by the rich, although they may eat what they like.

Mr. Weller retired to pay for the letter, which Mr. Tupman was desired by Mr. Pickwick to open. The missive was from Mr. Snodgrass, and to the effect that having seen an account of the proceedings of an individual, whom his friends had often mentioned in their correspondence, in the Insolvent Debtors' Court, Portugal Street, London, he had extracted the paragraph from the papers, and forwarded it for the benefit of those whom it might concern.

"Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle: "it can't be our fellow-traveller Boozie?"

"Or that Mr. Tims," suggested Mr. Pickwick.

"No, neither of them," said Mr. Tupman, referring to the letter: "it is no other than Mr. Adolphus Crashem, *alias* Mr. William Sugden, under which name it appears that he was sued and arrested."

Mr. Pickwick made a speedy end of his breakfast; and when the things were cleared away, Mr. Tupman read to his astonished audience

the account of the proceedings of the above-named gentleman in the Insolvents' Court. We shall not, however, here reprint the exact statement as it was forwarded by Mr. Snodgrass: subsequent enquiries have made us aware of those *minutiæ* connected with the case which were not mentioned in the police report;—we shall therefore hasten to lay the business in a detailed and complete form before our readers.

The construction of the Court House, Portugal Street, is in humble imitation of the Courts in Westminster Hall. Instead of passing through red curtains to obtain admittance, you enter by a green-baize-covered door, studded with brass-nails, which do not, however, always keep the aforesaid green-baize attached to the aforesaid door. In the little lobby outside this means of egress and ingress, you will encounter two or three seedy-looking gentlemen, whose dress and address are neither interesting nor uncommon. They are generally employed in transferring a few dirty papers to each other, with that ambiguity which is deemed an essential quality in all diplomatic writings, acts of parliament, and law proceedings.

Having passed into the Court, you find your hat suddenly crushed between two or three individuals, whose own hats had most likely undergone that process some time before they arrived there; and you immediately find it prudent to apply your hand to your watch-chain, if you have one. Your olfactory nerves are simultaneously assailed with a sickly, fœtid smell of perspiration emanating from unwashed skins; and if you push a little farther into the Court, you arrive at a partition with a low door, which is kept by a man in rusty black, very much resembling a pew-opener in a Methodist-chapel. Once established in this spot, you lean your elbows upon the little door or partition, and proceed to take a more particular survey of the locality and its inmates.

At the farther end is a stage, on which are placed the four desks behind which as many Commissioners sometimes sit; although on general occasions there is but one present. In the middle is a pew, or box, divided into two rows, and embellished by the barristers. In the corner next to where you are posted, of the front row, sits (when he does not stand to examine a witness or address the Court) the formidable Mr. Roughrow, whom we strongly recommend all insolvents to retain, if they do not wish to be something more than perplexed, should he be against them. But advice is the only commodity the world refuses to receive, although it may be had *gratis*, with an allowance to those who take a quantity.

Next to Mr. Roughrow is Mr. Butler, the most talented counsel practising at that Court, and one who is certain to get an insolvent out of a scrape, and an opposing creditor into one, if those very desirable ends happen to be within the compass of possibility. Beside and behind Mr. Butler are seated two or three other members of the independent Bar—their privileges usually consisting in a total freedom from the weight of any business at all.

Between the stage on which the Commissioners are seated and the pew containing the barristers as aforesaid, is a low, large, dirty table, round which are placed some twelve or fourteen attorneys or law-agents, looking much more insolvent than any of their clients. Many

of them seem to lack that useful and very generally estimated commodity—a shirt (if we must tell the *naked* truth); and a few appear to be so much attached to the only one they possess, that they are exceedingly loth to part with it even after it has been turned twice since the middle of the previous month. The independence of the Bar is like a ghost—a thing much talked of, but never seen: the independence of the lawyers at the Insolvents' Court is, however, far from problematical; inasmuch as some of the fraternity carry it to such an extent as occasionally to make their appearance at the low table in a pleasing and highly interesting state of intoxication.

At the extremity of the Court facing the one which is embellished by the luminous presence of the Commissioners, is the receptacle for the audience, which principally consists of decrepit old men, leaning their hands and chins upon cane walking-sticks, and watching the proceedings with a most critical eye. On the left hand side of the barristers' seats, the reporters of the newspapers occupy a small box in the immediate neighbourhood of the pulpit into which the opposing creditors hoist themselves, when they proceed thither for the purpose of punishing some silly young man whom their own pressing invitations to obtain goods upon credit have ruined. Immediately opposite to this pulpit, on the other side of the Court, is the box into which the insolvents ascend to be bullied by their creditors; and connected with that "bad eminence" is the pew allotted to petitioners who await their hearing or their sentence.

Be it observed, *en passant*, that no tradesman, who has the slightest claim to respectability, ever opposes his creditor: this mode of paltry and miserable revenge is only resorted to by certain scoundrels, who, having entrapped those whom they deem a prey into their books and clutches, are disappointed at not being paid the money that is due to them, together with the hundred and fifty per cent. they anticipated to pocket by the transaction. No tradesman that ever entered opposition against an insolvent, has, since the establishment of the Court, left the witness-box with any thing but disgrace to himself; and in most instances he has himself figured in the pulpit on the other side in the course of a few months, or a year at the outside.

Such was the state of matters in the Court House in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, on the morning when Mr. Adolphus Crashem, *alias* Mr. William Sugden (by which latter name we shall henceforth distinguish him) accompanied Mr. William Wibsey, the tipstaff, from the Royal Repose, or, in vulgar parlance, King's Bench Prison, to the aforesaid Court.

On Mr. Sugden's arrival at the Court, the examination of Lord Thomas Swales was just concluded. His lordship had just been proved by an opposing creditor to be the most unmitigated swindler on the face of the earth: but the learned Commissioner Buckphiz prudently and kindly took his lordship's patent of nobility into consideration, and instead of remanding him for three years, as he would any poor devil without a title, ordered him to be discharged forthwith. His lordship, who looked any thing but like an insolvent, being dressed in the extreme of fashion, scarcely condescended to thank the Commissioner for this Daniel-like decision, but withdrew to the tavern op-

posite to drink gin and water and smoke cigars with the tipstaff who had charge of him, the sporting friends who waited for him, and the attorney who had seen him through the Court.

Another Insolvent was then summoned into the box; and as the memory of this individual was exceedingly treacherous relative to certain goods for the disposal of which he could not exactly account, a long and tedious examination ensued; and after a species of bull-baiting which lasted about two hours, nothing having been elicited, Mr Commissioner Buckphiz tried an experiment with a view of refreshing the Insolvent's memory, and remanded him for the space of eighteen months from the day in which he filed his petition. The discomfited Insolvent received his sentence with a singularly wry face; and having resumed his seat in the pew allotted to his fraternity, he took from his blue cotton handkerchief a little luncheon of cold veal and bread which he had brought with him; and that, with the addition of some salt extracted from his waistcoat pocket, seemed to console him for his disappointment. On the following morning the nobleman's case was only slightly alluded to in the public papers; whereas the examination of the unfortunate devil who was thus remanded, was set forth in all the glaring colours and in all the embellishments usually adopted in such reports. It is scarcely necessary to observe that the case of Lord Swales was ten thousand times blacker than that of this poor man: but the former was the son of a peer; and the latter was a broken-down linen-draper.

It is highly amusing and edifying at the same time, to observe the species of sensation which takes place in the Court when an Insolvent descends from the box in which he had so conspicuously figured. The Commissioner looks up to see if the windows in the lanthorn on the roof be sufficiently open to ventilate the room: the old clerk beneath him tumbles about a parcel of papers which bear no reference in the slightest degree to any thing with which he has to do at the moment; the other clerk in the brown coat and brass buttons, and with sandy hair, next to him, looks very mysteriously over *his* papers; Messieurs Butler and Roughrow converse in whispers; the barrister in spectacles behind them reads the *Times* with more desperate attention than before, because, as he has not got a brief, he must be doing something; the reporters mend their pens; some of the attorneys proceed to the gin-shop opposite, to refresh themselves with a small drop of strong waters, their stomachs having been long estranged to weaker liquids; a mother, seated amongst the spectators, ventures to give suck to her child, who now screams with temporary impunity; the man at the little desk underneath the Insolvent's examination-box, administers certain small incitements to perjury, vulgarly called oaths, relative to the correctness of schedules, to those petitioners who may have been heard; and, in fact, the interval is one of general excitement and bustle.

This interval is also of great utility to those attorneys who either do not choose to join their brethren in "a go of gin," or who have already had too much to stand any more. They congregate in a small group together, and discuss the merits of their various clients; or else they hasten to assure those who have just been heard, that they are certain to obtain their discharge, whereas they are morally

convinced the Insolvents will be remanded for at least a twelvemonth. The most conspicuous figure in this interesting group is generally a very short individual, with a countenance proclaiming for its owner an Israelite extraction. He is blessed with a seedy suit of black, a dirty white neck-cloth, and such a hang-dog look, that he is quite enough to terrify even the Commissioners and barristers themselves, to say nothing of the opposing creditors, few of whom are calculated to be alarmed at trifles. This worthy individual is sole and undisputed proprietor of a couple of garrets with the use of a back-kitchen, in an obscure street leading out of the Blackfriars' Road; and his usual lounges in the course of the day are the Parade in the Bench, and the Coffee-Gallery in the Fleet. Another remarkable figure in the above-named group is a gentleman about the middle height, somewhat slim in figure, also attired in rusty black, and wearing his double-breasted waistcoat most prudently and religiously buttoned up to his throat. This praiseworthy solicitor is adorned with black hair, and whiskers of the same; and his hands, for which he finds no use in gloves, are made to correspond with the rest of his appearance. A third individual is a fierce-looking personage, of Jewish extraction (whatever may be his persuasion), with a face somewhat damaged by the small-pox, and with whiskers which are too large to be professional. Let us, however, observe, with that candour for which we are so remarkable, that this gentleman *does* wear a shirt. We are fond of recording instances where men, who are not expected to do so, really keep pace with their fellow-creatures in the progressive march of civilization and refinement.

The strict probity and honour of the attorneys practising in this Court may be fully exemplified by the following statement. If their clients be tolerably well off, they usually manage to extract about five-and-twenty or thirty pounds from the pockets of each, whereas their regular charges cannot possibly amount to more than ten or twelve. And then these highly respectable gentlemen (the attorneys—not the clients) make an affidavit to something like the following purpose:—

"Stephen Suckemdry, gentleman, attorney for the said prisoner, maketh oath, and saith, that every sum of money charged in the within bill as paid, 'and every matter charged therein' as done, which would in the usual course of business be paid and done up to the time of swearing this affidavit, have been actually paid and done respectively; and that all payments and matters in the said bill charged are essentially necessary to the discharge of the said prisoner; and farther that the sum of ten pounds, and no more, has been paid to or for the said attorney, on account of the said bill, to the time of swearing this affidavit.

"Sworn at the Office
of the said Court
in Lincoln's Inn Fields, &c.

"STEPHEN SUCKEMDRY."

If various little dinners, pints of sherry, "goes of gin," &c. &c., and the expenditure incurred thereby, together with the costs for

messengers never sent, letters never perused, documents never searched for, &c. &c., compose the "charges essentially necessary for the interests of the said prisoner," then are the practitioners in the Insolvents' Court men highly injured and libelled by this and the preceding page. But if the chops, the sherry, the gin, and the surplus charges be true causes of useless expenditure, then may the fraternity (with but few exceptions, such as Mr. Bury, of Trafalgar Square, and Mr. Pattleson, of Bouverie Street., who are really gentlemen and upright solicitors) be without scruple designated as the most unmitigated set of plundering and perjured scoundrels on the face of the earth.

We will, however, eschew farther description for the present, and pursue the thread of our narrative with the same ease which we exemplified in leaving it.

The petitions of Lords Swales and the linen-draper having been disposed of, the clerk summoned "WILLIAM SUGDEN," at the top of most discordant voice; and when the personage thus adjured jumped sightly into the box, his presence was greeted on the part of the audience with that sort of compassionate attention which is bestowed upon gentlemen in the press yard while their fetters are being knocked off. But Mr. Sugden leant over the box with great ease and independence of manner, and tried to stare Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz out of countenance; but finding that to be as ineffectual as endeavouring to do the same to a brass warming-pan, he looked very bashful and modest to please the Court, and then took a pinch of snuff to please himself.

It appeared that two creditors had entered opposition against Mr. William Sugden; and at the announcement, which was made by the clerk of the Court, the Insolvent politely requested to be informed by his creditors "if they didn't wish they might get it?" A loud laugh on the part of the spectators, and in which all the barristers and attornies cordially joined, welcomed this sprightly sally on the part of Mr. Sugden: but Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz threatened to dismiss the petition if the Insolvent repeated his pleasantries; whereupon Messieurs Butler and Roughrow, who had been retained by the attorney of Mr. William Sugden, desired that gentleman to take care and not commit himself.

The names of the opposing creditors were now called; and Mr. Anthony Stickemin, tailor, and Mr. Michael Nagsflesh, horse-dealer, answered to the summons.

A few preliminary questions having been put to the Insolvent by the learned Commissioner, and having been as duly replied to by Mr. Sugden, Mr. Anthony Stickemin was requested to ascend the witness-box, an invitation with which he complied with an alacrity and promptitude as remarkable as they were meritorious. Mr. Stickemin had retained no Counsel: he opposed in person, and entered with an air of determination and valour upon the business which had brought him thither.

It seems that this was the second time that Mr. Stickemin was Mr. Sugden's creditor. Mr. Sugden had been imprisoned in France, and the claim of Mr. Stickemin, who was one of the detaining creditors on that occasion, was liquidated by Mr. Sugden, senior, as the reader will

remember. Three months before the period of which we are now writing (that is, of the transactions in the Insolvents' Court) Mr. Sugden made his appearance in England and at Mr. Stickemin's shop; and the consequence of the visit was that a quantity of clothes were duly ordered, and forwarded to Mr. Sugden's lodgings in Maddox Street, Mr. Stickemin fancying that as his debtor's father had already paid his son's bill once, the same result might attend a renewal of credit in that quarter.

"You may put any questions you please to the Insolvent," said Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz, who had been making copious notes of a new-projected bill for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt in the book in which it was usually supposed that he wrote the leading features of the cases before him.

"Were there not six pairs of buckskin hunting-breeches among the things I sent to your lodgings?" demanded Mr. Anthony Stickemin of Mr. William Sugden.

"I shouldn't be surprised if there were," answered the last named gentleman with his characteristic off-hand manner.

"And did you not pawn them at Mr. Clegg's in Prince's Street?" continued the tailor.

"You've hit the right nail on the head again, old fellow," replied the Insolvent. "It's the proper sow you've got by the ear, as my friend the Great Cham of Tartary used to say."

Here Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz again interfered to remind Mr. Sugden that he must give direct answers to the questions of his opposing creditor; whereupon Mr. Sugden refreshed himself with another pinch of snuff, nodded familiarly at the Commissioner, muttered something which sounded very much like the words "I twig," and then assumed an attitude of the most profound attention.

"Did you not tell me," continued Mr. Anthony Stickemin, "in order to obtain fresh credit with me, that your father had come down with the stumpy, as you called it?"

"Certainly," answered Mr. Sugden.

"And did you not say that you were going to stand for some borough in Hampshire, as you had sufficient influence in that part of the country to turn an election, whereas you hadn't even the power to turn a shilling?"

Here Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz, who never permitted an insolvent to utter any thing in the shape of a joke, facetiously observed "that he thought Mr. Sugden had got into the wrong box at last;" whereat there was a general laugh, which of course was not interrupted by the Commissioner. Mr. Sugden himself indulged in a cachinnation so loud and long that he quite won the heart of the Commissioner, who from that moment determined to discharge him, however dark might be the features of the case.

But Mr. Stickemin had not laughed; so, when order was once more restored, Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz desired him in a very savage voice to "make haste with his opposition, and not waste the precious time of the Court, or he should know the reason why."

"But, Sir—" began the discomfited tailor.

"Don't address yourself to me: address yourself to the Insolvent, Sir," cried Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz.

Messieurs Butler and Roughrow smiled at each other, and then smiled at the Insolvent, to intimate that "all was right." Mr. Sugden pointed towards the opposing creditor, and playfully jerked his left thumb over his left shoulder, which in symbolic language meant that "Mr. Stickemin was done for, and that his opposition was no go."

"The leathern breeches I traced out," continued Mr. Stickemin, considerably crest-fallen; "but what became of the two black surtout coats—the red waistcoat with gold buttons—the cut-away green riding-coat—the black breeches—and the other articles you swindled me out of?"

Mr. Sugden very quietly intimated that the goods alluded to were in the custody of a relative, from whom, with his usual prudence and foresight, he had taken certain small receipts which he had placed in the hands of the provisional assignee of the Insolvents' Court.

Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz did not appear exactly to understand this explanation: so Mr. Roughrow undertook to enlighten him.

"My client means, in plain language, Sir, that he has pawned the clothes, and that the receipts are the duplicates," said Mr. Roughrow

"Ah, ha! I see," said Mr. Buckphiz. "I believe that a pawnbroker is not unfrequently denominated one's uncle?"

Mr. Butler intimated that the learned Commissioner was right; and when another little laugh had been very successfully got up and accomplished, Mr. Stickemin was asked if he had any more questions to put to the Insolvent. As he replied in the negative, Mr. Butler rose with the determination of making his gown serve as a cloak for brow-beating the witness, who but for that protection might have been as insolent as he chose to the barrister.

"You are a tailor in Regent Street, I believe?" said Mr. Butler addressing himself to the miserable creditor.

"That is my trade, Sir," was the quiet reply.

"Oh! that's your *craft*, is it?" resumed Mr. Butler, with a glance towards the Commissioner, who smiled—not at the joke, nor the sarcasm conveyed by it—but because he had at that moment penned a clause in the new Bill for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt (*lucus a non lucendo)* which rendered the Insolvents' Court more necessary and permanent than ever, and consequently ensured a continuance in office to himself and his brother Commissioners.

Mr. Stickemin again admitted that he was a tailor.

"And I believe that you were the creditor who arrested the Insolvent?" continued the learned Counsel.

"I was, Sir," answered the creditor: "because I knew that he meant to cheat me."

"And how did you find *that* out?" demanded Mr. Butler.

"Because when I called at his house for my little bill, he was always denied to me," was the reply.

"Might he not have been really out or engaged?"

"Oh! I know that on several occasions he was at home, when I called," persisted Mr. Stickemin.

And, pray, Sir, how do you know that he was at home on those occasions?" asked the Counsel.

"Because, Sir," rejoined Mr. Stickemin, "I heard him sing out to

his servant, 'There's that infernal scoundrel of a tailor, Ben, go and tell him I'm not at home.'"

"You see, Sir, the private opinion which the Insolvent entertained of his creditor's moral character," observed Mr. Butler, with a look of the most profound erudition, to the Commissioner.

The Commissioner glanced towards the witness, and shook his head mysteriously—a movement which plainly intimated that he, Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz, knew, of his own private knowledge, that Mr. Stickemin was the most consummate scoundrel and desperate villain under the canopy of heaven.

Mr. Butler suffered all this to make its due impression in favour of the Insolvent, and then again addressed himself to the opposing creditor.

"Now, Mr. Stickemin," said the learned Counsel, "will you have the kindness to inform us how you became aware that the Insolvent had pledged the—the—leather breeches, I think?"

"Yes, Sir—buckskin breeches," observed Mr. Stickemin.

"Oh! buckskin breeches, eh?" said Mr. Butler. "Well—Sir—about these buckskin breeches, then;"—and the excellent lawyer laid prodigious emphasis upon those which are generally supposed to be unmentionables.

"I'll tell you how it was, Sir," answered Mr. Stickemin. "One Sunday morning, as I was going to Saint James's church, I overtook Mr. Clegg, the great pawnbroker of Prince's Street, who was walking the same way, quite promiscuously, along with Mrs. Clegg, Miss Jemima, and little Orlando in his new suit, for he'd only been breeched the day before. So I passed the compliment of the morning to Clegg and his family, and we walked on together, as we happen to sit generally in the same place. But I looked at my friend Clegg with an uncommon sharp eye, for I saw that he'd got on a bran-new pair of buckskin breeches; and on closer inspection I instantly recognised my own peculiar make and cut. Just at that moment we arrived at the church door, and so I couldn't say any thing then. But when the parson was a-preaching the sermon, I put my head down in the pew and asked Mr. Clegg how he'd come by them breeches. 'Why,' said he in a whisper, 'I'll tell you how it is. I'm going to take the saycrament,' says he, 'and so I thought I'd make myself uncommon smart, and do the thing a little genteel. Now, between ourselves, I never wear any clothes of my own—I have none, in fact. I never patronise a tailor; but I always appear well drest, and no man has such a variety of attire. One day I wear a blue coat and brown trowsers; another, a shooting-jacket and gaiters; and another, an entire suit of black.' —'Well,' said I, 'that's true: but how the devil do you manage it?' —'Why,' said he, 'I'll tell you how it is: I always wear the clothes of my customers—the pledged articles, you know. For instance, this coat belongs to the clerk of a great publisher not a hundred miles off —this waistcoat was pawned a few days ago by the servant of a nobleman in the King's Bench, who always patronises me—those boots were sent home by Macdonell to a young spark living in the Albany, and were pledged on the following morning—and of these breeches I've got six pairs. I shall give 'em all a turn before I've done.'—'Oh! oh! and that hat,' whispered I, to avoid exciting any suspicion on his part

as to my real motives of questioning him.—'That hat,' said he, speaking quickly, because the sermon was just over, 'up to this time has been pawned regularly every Monday morning and redeemed every Saturday night, for the last six months. It belongs to a member of the swell-mob, who preaches at the Obelisk in St. George's Fields every Sunday, and his confederates help themselves to the watches and handkerchiefs of the congregation he gets round him. He went yesterday afternoon to the treadmill for six weeks; but when he comes out again, he'll redeem his hat as usual, and begin preaching away more fiercely than ever. In the mean time I wear it for him.'—This was the way, Sir, in which I discovered that Mr. Sugden had pawned the buckskin breeches."

"And more shame for ye, Mr. What-d'ye-call-it?" vociferated loud voice from the corner of the Court near the green-baize door. "That's the way you Snips of the Vest End entraps youngsters, is Mr. Thingembob?"

"Silence!" exclaimed a hanger-on of the Court.

Mr. William Sugden strongly suspected that it was his excellent father's voice which had caused the interruption; but as the learned Commissioner Buckphiz was entirely wrapt up in the draught of the bill before alluded to, no further notice was taken of the circumstance.

"You may stand down, Sir," said Mr. Butler to the opposing creditor, after he had put a few more questions tending to elicit facts in favour of the Insolvent, to the effect that Mr. Stickemin's bill was very exorbitant, that he had pressed his goods upon his debtor, that he never expected to be paid by more than one customer out of ten, that he who paid amply remunerated him for the loss of all the rest, and that he himself became bankrupt regularly every three years, in order to have an excuse for arresting his customers and getting in his accounts, through the medium of assignees who were generally intimate friends of his own. Mr. Butler appeared to be perfectly satisfied with this acknowledgment on the part of the opposing creditor; and when Mr. Stickemin had descended from the box, Mr. Butler sate down, and Mr. Michael Nagsflesh was summoned to the place just vacated by the discomfited tailor.

The second witness having been duly sworn, and the Commissioner having taken a good long stare at him, the examination of Mr. William Sugden was renewed.

"Did you not obtain a horse from me under the name of Adolphus Crashem, son of General Crashem, of Crashem Park?" inquired Mr. Nagsflesh.

"Yes—and it was paid for by my father," answered the Insolvent in a tone of the most noble contempt.

"I know that," said Mr. Nagsflesh. "I merely want to show that you entered yourself for the sweepstakes under a false name."

"When I renewed credit with you a few weeks ago," observed Mr. Sugden, "you knew that my name was not Crashem; but you gave me any thing I wanted on trust, as you said at the time "that the old fogey would pay for it all again.'"

"I didn't use any such language," exclaimed Mr. Nagsflesh. "A greater falsehood was never uttered under the roof of the House of Commons."

"Proceed with your questions, Sir," said the learned Commissioner very savagely, "and don't bandy words with the Insolvent, or—"

And Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz shook his pen with a sublime air of mysterious portent, at the opposing creditor—a movement that excited the admiration of Messieurs Butler and Roughrow to an extraordinary degree.

"Did you not tell me that you were the intimate friend of Twankay Fum, the Great Cham of Tartary?" demanded Mr. Michael Nagsflesh of the Insolvent; "and did you not also inform me that his Majesty, the Cham Twankay, had commissioned you to purchase a hundred horses for him in this country, and ship them on board a junk which you expected every day to arrive in the Pool?"

"There's some truth in that," said Mr. Sugden, "I scorn to tell a lie."

"Well, it is about time to entertain that notion," cried Mr. Nagsflesh. "But wasn't I fool enough to believe all you told me?"

Mr. Sugden did not for one moment attempt to dispute his creditor's right to this highly distinguishing and self-imposed title.

"I repeat," said Mr. Nagsflesh with emphasis, "wasn't I fool enough to believe you?"

Mr. Sugden again intimated that he was.

"And didn't you get me to go, for the first time in my life, to Margate with you by the steam-boat?" continued the horse-dealer; "and didn't you very confidentially point out a queer-looking, red-bottomed, foreign-kind of vessel lying at anchor at the mouth of the Thames? and, after all, wasn't it nothing else but the Nore-light?"

"Well, Sir, and what of that?" enquired Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz, who began to feel the cravings of a good appetite, and recollected that he had ordered luncheon to be ready at half-past two o'clock.

"What of that, Sir?" exclaimed Mr. Michael Nagsflesh, "why, Sir, he swore that it was his junk come to fetch the horses for his friend the Great Cham."

An agreeable tittering, varied by one or two right-down horse-laughs, welcomed this avowal; and when it had subsided, Mr. Nagsflesh proceeded.

"Insolvent," continued he, "didn't you also ask me to dine with you? and didn't you promise to introduce me to some of the Great Cham's emissaries? and weren't the people in the queer costumes that I met at your lodgings sheriff's-officers, who had possession of your person and your property?"

To all these demands a reply in the affirmative was returned.

"Didn't you say that one was Rumfooselem-beg, the Great Cham's Master of the Horse?" continued Mr. Nagsflesh; "that another was Ali Tantabogram, the Great Cham's Pipe-holder and Peripatetic Tobacco-Stopper? And weren't they no others, after all, than Slike and Buffer of Chancery Lane?"

"Very true," replied Mr. Sugden with the utmost *sang-froid*, as he again favoured his Counsel with a familiar nod of intelligence.

"And didn't I let you have a couple of horses, in consequence of all these representations? Now, Sir, what became of *those* horses? I suppose you didn't pawn *them?*" observed Mr. Nagsflesh with a complacent smile.

"They're the leaders of the Opposition now," replied Mr. William Sugden.

This reply excited general astonishment, particularly in that inclosure which we before described as allotted to the audience, and where a gentleman without a coat whispered to another, whose shoes were curiously contrived to let in the fresh air at the toes, that "he knew there was a good many asses in the House of Commons; but that he never before heard of there being any horses there." The matter was, however, speedily explained by Mr. William Sugden, who set all doubt and uncertainty at rest, by assuring the Court that the Opposition was the name of a coach on the Brighton road, and that the horses in question, had been sold at a remarkably reduced rate to the proprietor thereof.

Mr. Michael Nagsflesh having thus terminated his opposition, by causing the elucidation of another, Mr. Roughrow arose, brushed a little flue off the handsome velvet facings of his coat, and prepared to interrogate the witness.

"Now, Mr. Michael Nagsflesh," said Mr. Roughrow, "did you not, upon your oath, engage the Insolvent to accept fresh credit of you on his return from France three or four months ago?"

"No, Sir—I did not. He first called upon me—"

"He first called upon you. Well—and what did you say to him?" proceeded the Counsel.

"I asked him how he was getting on," was the answer.

"You asked him how he was getting on. And what reply did he make?" demanded Mr. Roughrow.

"Swimmingly," returned Mr. Nagsflesh.

"Swimmingly," repeated Mr. Roughrow. "And what did you say then?"

"That I was very glad to hear it."

"That you were very glad to hear it. Now, Sir—upon your oath," continued the Counsel, shaking his brief in a menacing manner, "what took place after this interchange of compliments?"

"He asked me to lend him five pounds, which I did," was the immediate reply.

"Which you did. But was not something said about horses on that occasion?"

"I think I intimated that I had two fine horses to dispose of; but I'm not sure," replied Mr. Nagsflesh.

"You think you intimated that you had two fine horses to dispose of; but you are not sure," said Mr. Roughrow. "Now, Sir, will you undertake to swear that you did not say so?"

"No, Sir, I will not."

"You will not. Did you not tell Mr. Sugden that you would put a commission in his pocket for any order he could get you?"

"That was on another occasion, Sir."

"That was on another occasion. Well—how long after the first call was it, then?"

"The next day."

"The next day," continued Mr. Roughrow. "Now two more questions, Sir—and I have done. Did you not, through the recommendation of the Insolvent, dispose of a horse to a Mr. Dunn Browne, after you had sold the two horses to the Insolvent?"

"I did, Sir," was the answer.

"You did,' said Mr. Roughrow, exchanging a significant smile with Mr. Butler, then disturbing three or four papers that lay before him, and putting them in order again. "And—upon your oath—when the aforesaid horse was put into Mr. Dunn Browne's stables, was it not seized with the staggers—did it not fall down—and were not its nostrils plugged up with sponges, to prevent the running of the glanders?"

Mr. Nagsflesh was exceedingly modest in replying to these soft impeachments: an answer in the affirmative was, however, elicited after some trouble, and Mr. Roughrow sate down in triumph, while Mr. Nagsflesh got down in despair.

Mr. Butler now rose to address the Court. After the usual preliminary observations, he begged to remind the Court that Mr. William Sugden was a very young man still—he might almost say a boy: and certainly many of his pursuits had lately savoured of the puerile occupations of childhood. He would bear out his assertion by reminding the Court that the Insolvent, previous to his arrest, had (in order to avoid bailiffs) been compelled to play at *hide and seek:* he would also admit that the evidence of the opposing creditors had, in one or two instances, fully proven that the Insolvent had been considerably addicted to *crackers*, and to *drawing the long bow.* It was also very palpable that the Insolvent had been *playing at horses* —the *traces* of which might be discovered in the testimony of Mr. Michael Nagsflesh. He had not, however, proved himself a *bolter* —although in that way he might follow many a *leader.* This was an extenuating circumstance; and he should request for his client the kind consideration of the Court in reference to it.

The learned Counsel, having drawn breath, then proceeded to dissect the testimony of the opposing creditors, and from the evidence that had been obtained from them by the cross-examination of himself and his learned friend, to show that both Messieurs Michael Nagsflesh and Anthony Stickemin had done all in their power to engage the Insolvent to accept of fresh credit at their respective establishments, with the hope of being subsequently paid by his father, who had already liquidated his liabilities more than once. Mr. Butler then made a few concise remarks relative to the characters of the opposing creditors: he designated one as a dishonest horse-dealer, and the other as a triennial bankrupt; and (as he was aware that the Commissioner's veal-cutlet had just been taken into the private room, with a pint of sherry, from the tavern at the corner of the street) he declared his determination of intruding no longer upon the *patience* (in this sense, synonymous with *appetite)* of the Court, but would leave his client to the well-known impartiality and mercy of his judge.

Mr. Commissioner Buckphiz, who, during the last hour, had cast many anxious glances towards the private door at the end of the stage, hastily ran his eye over the draught of the Imprisonment for Debt Bill, from which he pretended to read a few notes or minutes of the proceedings; and, having repeated all the extenuating circumstances which were urged by Mr. Butler, as the motives of the judgment he was about to pronounce, he declared "that William Sugden was entitled to the benefit of the Act," and ordered him to be discharged forthwith.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MR. KALLAWAY'S COTTAGE IN THE ENVIRONS OF PARIS.—MR. KALLAWAY GIVES A SUPPER-PARTY.—MR. TUPMAN MEETS WITH A LUDICROUS ADVENTURE.—MR. SCUTTLE AND MR. KALLAWAY'S DISCOURSE, WITH VARIOUS OTHER INTERESTING PARTICULARS

TURN we once again to the land in which we have left the principal heroes of these remarkable memoirs.

In that unfashionable part of Paris, which is approached by the Faubourg du Roule, and which is denominated the Batignolles, was a neat cottage on the very outskirts of the city. Cottages are usually considered to be very little houses, in the same way as they are supposed to be the abode of happiness and contentment, by all except those who live in them. But the cottage, of which we are now speaking, was a tolerably-sized eight-roomed house; built somewhat in the English fashion: the will and taste of its proprietor had alone designated it as a cottage. It had a large garden attached to it—it was guarded by a dog not bigger than a moderately-sized donkey—it was embellished by a luxuriant grape-vine without—and its internal decoration, independent of the furniture, was a widower of forty.

Mr. Kallaway—such was the gentleman's name—reared his own poultry, fattened his own pigs, fed his own ducks, rode his own pony, bottled his own wine, and cultivated his own garden. The domestic duties of his establishment devolved upon a couple of cherry-cheeked, plump damsels, who had migrated from the south of France some few years previously; and who, on their arrival in Paris, immediately found situations and wages in the cottage inhabited by Mr. Kallaway.

Mr. Kallaway himself was once a large farmer and grazier in the west of England: but "agricultural distress and commercial embarrassments" suddenly deprived him of nearly all his possessions; and he retired to the Continent with the small competency which the wrecks of his fortune enabled him to realize. In person he was of tolerably decent appearance—about the middle height—with florid complexion—sandy whiskers, and light hair—good teeth—and a laughing blue eye. He was of a gay and lively disposition, frank and open in his manner, and generous in his nature.

Such is the gentleman who resolved upon giving a supper to some of his English acquaintances; and as he was not over-burdened with friends or visitors at any time, he requested his friend Mr. Scuttle to issue the cards of invitation for him. This demand was of course complied with; and at seven o'clock one fine evening, a party of about five-and-twenty people were sauntering in the garden at the back of Mr. Kallaway's house. There were equal numbers, as nearly as might be, of ladies and gentlemen. Amongst the former were Mrs. Weston and half a dozen of her female friends; and amongst the latter might be seen the illustrious forms of Messrs. Pickwick, Tupman, Winkle, Walker, Chitty, Siffkin, and Scuttle. Such a galaxy of bright names never before embellished a back-garden.

When the host had been duly presented to all his guests, or his

guests to him, whichever the reader likes, by Mr. Scuttle, the company divided into little knots or groups, and hastened to visit, some the ducks, some the fowls, some the rabbits, and others the great dog. Mr. Pickwick and Mrs. Weston walked into the parlour, which opened upon the garden, and sate down on a small ottoman by the window.

"Hem!" said Mr. Pickwick, as he placed himself next to the attractive widow.

"Did you speak?" enquired Mrs. Weston, softly.

"I was thinking that I ought to muster up courage, and communicate my views and hopes to your excellent uncle," said Mr. Pickwick, casting a tender glance at his companion through his immortal spectacles; "I have determined to do so every day up to this period —and—"

"And—what?" murmured the fair widow.

"My dear Mrs. Weston," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, suddenly rising, and seizing his hat with a determination of manner which greatly became him: "I am resolved this very moment to communicate with my friend Scuttle. Excuse me for five minutes;—" and with these words the enraptured lover bounded airily from the presence of his fair one, and alighted upon Mr. Kallaway's toes at the bottom of the steps which led into the garden.

"A thousand pardons!" cried Mr. Pickwick, shaking the hand of his new acquaintance.

"Oh! it's nothing, I assure you—upon my honour it's nothing," returned Mr. Kallaway, whose face was bedewed with the tears which acute anguish had wrung from his eyes.

"Well—I'm glad I've not hurt you, my dear Sir," said the good-natured Mr. Pickwick. "But I wished particularly to speak with my friend Scuttle on a very delicate subject—"

"There he is, then—close by that heap of manure at the corner of the stable," cried Mr. Kallaway. "But, if you were going to propose to some handsome young gal, you couldn't be more lively," added the late farmer and grazier. "I recollect, when I went courting—"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick, drawing very close to Mr. Kallaway, and preparing to listen with the greatest attention; as he hoped to obtain a hint which might judiciously direct his own proceedings in reference to Mr. Scuttle: "Indeed! and pray, what did *you* do?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"I recollect the day that I spoke to my father-in-law as well as possible," continued Mr. Kallaway. "Of course that was when I lived in England."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands.

"It was an eventful day for me," proceeded Mr. Kallaway, shaking his head mysteriously.

"God bless me! was it indeed?" cried Mr. Pickwick, a little alarmed.

"It was, upon my honour," said Mr. Kallaway, with another portentous shake of the head. "The morning was dark and gloomy—it was a Friday, too—and the butter had all turned sour over-night. My black sow had produced me, a week or so before, five as nice little pigs as ever you'd wish to see on a summer's day. Well—I'd enlarged my pig's-stye about half a foot; and this caused the building

to project the least bit in the world upon the footpath that led from the George and Punch-bowl to Mrs. Burton's meadow. And now, what do you think Tom Austin did?"

'I really don't know," said Mr. Pickwick, anticipating some terrible result in reference to the pigs and the courting.

"Why," continued Mr. Kallaway, with an air of the deepest indignation, which seemed to proclaim that the sense of the insult was still as strong as ever in his mind, "he told Richard Sherrin that I'd been guilty of a trespass; whereupon Sherrin, by the advice of Skinflint, his attorney, pulled down the new planks of the stye, and let the whole litter into the village. Little Tommy Hawkins caught two of them—Ben Skipps, the butcher, caught a third—and the others were drowned in Sam Whitfield's pond, close by the willow-walk. The poor black sow look on sadly!"

"Poor creature!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, who suddenly found his sympathies deeply enlisted in the case of a black sow and her interesting offspring.

"This," continued Mr. Kallaway, "was enough to dispirit me on the very morning when I intended to propose to old Clumley for his daughter Hannah. I however put a good face on it, and walked across the close, round by the brick-kiln, and so up by Sowerby's mill, toward's father-in-law's house."

"And did you succeed in winning the fair hand of Miss Hannah Clumley?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, in a somewhat sentimental and plaintive tone of voice

"Well, by a strange coincidence," replied Mr. Kallaway, "I found Hannah engaged in hunting *her* sow—'twas a black and white one, Mr. Pickwick—out of the cucumber-beds; and desperate hard work it was."

So indeed it must have been; particularly as the fair hands of Miss Hannah Clumley (as Mr. Pickwick beautifully expressed himself) were, most probably, engaged in lugging out the aforesaid black and white sow by the tail.

"What a very singular coincidence!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Very," said Mr. Kallaway; "and any one else would have thought it ominous. I'm sure I did; but Hannah and her father declared that it was entirely in our favour, and it was very lucky that he thought so; for he became bankrupt three days after our wedding: and instead of turning out one of the richest men in that part o' the country, he proved to be the poorest."

A sudden thought illuminated the gigantic brain of Mr. Pickwick. What if he were to make use of the services of his new acquaintance, in breaking the matter to Mr. Scuttle? The idea was, certainly, a bright one—no other imagination than that of this truly great man could have entertained it—and he at once resolved to be candid and open with Mr. Kallaway.

"My dear Sir," said he, taking him by the button-hole, and leading him a little way from the steps where they had been standing, "in reference to that which you have just been telling me—"

"What! about the black sow?" interrupted Mr. Kallaway. "Ah! poor thing—the loss of her two young ones preyed deeply upon her mind!"

"'Twas not exactly alluding to that very interesting animal—interesting on account of her misfortunes," said Mr. Pickwick; "but to your wonderful proficiency in the—the—art—the art of—"

"Rearing the best pork in all Cheshire, you mean," observed Mr. Kallaway.

"My dear Sir, you mistake me once more," said Mr. Pickwick mildly. "I allude to your great proficiency in the art of—of—making love—that is—paying your addresses—you know—"

"Oh! I understand!" exclaimed the ex-farmer and grazier: "I was a very devil at that kind of thing."

"Precisely what I thought," said the overjoyed Mr. Pickwick. "And now, then—in one word, let me tell you that I am rather attached to Mrs. Weston—that I wish to ask Mr. Scuttle's consent to our union—and that I want a third person to undertake this very disagreeable task for me."

"Ah! ha!" cried Mr. Kallaway, inserting his knuckles into Mr. Pickwick's ribs with playful vehemence: "now the murder's out, is it? Well—as for the go-between, I'm your man."

Mr. Pickwick squeezed his companion's hand, pointed to the place where Mr. Scuttle was busily employed in holding forth to Messieurs Nassau Siffkin, Septimus Chitty, and Hook Walker, upon the causes of absence of mind, and hastily withdrew to seek once more the society of his beloved Mrs. Weston in the parlour.

"The causes of absence of mind," said Mr. Scuttle, "have been vainly conjectured. Last winter, I recollect that one evening I was seated in my study discussing a bottle of Burgundy, when I took it into my head to have some chestnuts. I accordingly summoned my servant, and desired him to bring me some of those edibles; and in order to make myself more comfortable, I ordered him to get me my slippers at the same time. Well, gentlemen—he brought them; and what do you think I did? Why—I put the chestnuts into the slippers and my toes between the bars, and never found out my mistake till I hadn't a bit of skin left on my foot."

"May my forehead be termed wrinkled and my hair gray,"—exclaimed Mr. Nassau Siffkin, "if I ever heard of so extraordinary an anecdote!"

"It was *callidum opus*—hot work, at all events," said Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"But by no means a part of my system," added Mr. Hook Walker.

"Oh! it was nothing to what occurred to me when I was in England some years ago," continued Mr. Scuttle: "I was dining with some friends at Long's Hotel, when in a moment of abstraction I took my handkerchief from the skirt of my coat, and in a paroxysm of rage rushed into the street to give myself in charge for having picked my own pocket! The best of it was, I didn't detect my error till the policeman took me to the station-house on a charge of being intoxicated and disorderly in the streets."

"*Melius et melius*—better and better," said Mr. Chitty. "So you were the sufferer in the *longus curro*—long run?"

At this moment Mr. Kallaway interrupted the conversation by requesting a minute's private discourse with Mr. Scuttle—a demand that was immediately complied with by that gentleman.

In the meantime a series of adventures had befallen the gallant Mr. Tracy Tupman. It appears that Mr. Kallaway had intended to regale his guests with a couple of most delicious syllabubs, made in the milk-pails which had been embellished with an *extra* scour for the occasion: and it also appears that as Mr. Tupman was calmly surveying two geese and a gander floating upon a little piece of water at the bottom of the garden, the sound of a light footstep fell upon his ear; whereupon he turned round, and his visual rays caught the fairy form of one of Mr. Kallaway's buxom French girls, with the two pails in her hands, as she hastened towards the cow-house for the purpose of completing the syllabubs which Mr. Kallaway had ordered.

Now whether Mr. Tupman merely wished to see how syllabubs were made—or whether the rosy cheeks and cherry lips of the young lady with the pails had attracted his attention, we cannot pretend to say. It is, however, an incontestable fact that Mr. Tupman followed the pretty servant to the stable, and that he began talking to her in the most singular commingling of English and wretched French ever yet offered as a specimen of the union of two dialects by any professor or experimentalist, ancient or modern. Mr. Tupman has also himself confessed that the young lady, doubtless perceiving that he was exceedingly obliging and polite, made a sign to him which intimated that he might do her a favour if he chose. Another sign or two made him aware of the nature of the boon required. The servant, having finished milking her cows, pointed to the remnants of some hay in a rack, then to a narrow and steep ladder in one corner of the stable, and lastly to the opening in the ceiling to which the said ladder conducted him who climbed it, and which was the only means of communication with the loft above.

Mr. Tupman was gallantry itself. He sprang up the ladder with the same ease and elasticity manifested by the elephant at Astley's or the Adelphi, when he walked up an inclined plane at the back of the stage; and in two minutes Mr. Tupman was in the loft above. The place was very dark—the roof was very low—and so the first thing Mr. Tupman did was to knock his head against a beam, and his hat over his eyes simultaneously, as he groped about for the hay. A playful rat, which then ran across his feet, did not help to compose his precious nerves; he, however, felt that his honour was at stake if he retreated without fulfilling the object of his mission: he accordingly put the best foot foremost; and, to his alarm and surprise, it was immediately caught fast in a large trap which closed upon it with a spring and a sharp sound that were any thing but grateful to his feelings or his ears.

"O Lord!" cried Mr. Tupman in a most piteous tone of voice; and in trying to disengage his leg from the trap, he made it rattle backwards and forwards upon the floor.

To add to his misery, a burst of laughter from the stable below reached him in his unpleasant predicament above; and in another moment he heard the cause of his disaster trip lightly away from the place with her two pails in her hands.

In every situation of life, that which we call courage, is nothing more than an impulse given by the fear of being thought a coward. We, therefore, hope that we state nothing derogatory to the valour of

Mr. Tracy Tupman, when we assure our readers that his courage forsook him at the same time that the pretty servant quitted the stable. Fortunately for him, there was a large heap of turf close by the trap; and having discovered it, so soon as his eyes became familiar with the various objects in the loft, he seated himself upon it in a state of mind bordering on despair.

"What!" thought he: "an influential member of the late famous club, to be caught in a rat-trap! one of the greatest travellers the world ever produced, to be seated on a heap of turf, with his right leg in the most painful jeopardy! Impossible!"

It was, however, very possible, and very true; for there sat Tracy Tupman, Esq., in the most vile durance ever experienced by an innocent man.

In the meantime Mr. Kallaway had successfully broken the ice at Mr. Scuttle's feet; so that the latter gentleman had only to walk into the pond; or in other words, the ex-grazier had broached the interesting subject before alluded to. And this is the way he did it.

"You seem very much a prey to your perpetual absence of mind, my dear friend," said Mr. Kallaway.

"Yes, Kallaway," returned Mr. Scuttle, "I want a great deal of taking care of."

"You do indeed," continued the former, who had thus obtained the cue he required. "And your niece must be often very much alarmed at the recurrence of those fits, which—"

"True," said Mr. Scuttle, "for some of them are exceedingly dangerous. It was but the other day, that as I was preparing to carve a leg of mutton at dinner, I put my spectacles upon the meat, and was going to apply the knife and fork to my eyes. Luckily, Mrs. W. seized hold of my hand in time; or else I might have done myself an injury."

"You might, indeed," returned Mr. Kallaway; "and how such occurrences must shock your poor niece! If she were married, it would be a different thing: she would then have a husband to take care of both her and you—"

"Gad! that's true," ejaculated Mr. Scuttle.

"A husband who would love and cherish her, and attend to all your little comforts," pursued Mr. Kallaway. "One, in fine who would be a companion to you, and a protector for your niece."

"The thing really sounds well," said Mr. Scuttle, a slight suspicion that his friend was talking in behalf and for the behoof of himself having entered his mind; and he more than half resolved to cut short the matter at once by assenting on the spot to the union of Mrs. Sophia Weston and Mr. Peter Kallaway.

"The fact is," continued Mr. Kallaway, delighted to see that his hints were so well received, and not for one moment deeming that their purport had been misinterpreted; the fact is, that Pickwick has already spoken to me—"

"Oh! *he* has mentioned the subject also, has he?" interrupted Mr. Scuttle. "Pickwick is a good fellow, and, I dare say, feels anxious for our welfare."

"He does, indeed," said Mr. Kallaway emphatically.

"And he has doubtless thought that my niece would be happier

with a protector, both on my account and her own," continued Mr. Scuttle. "How exceedingly considerate!"

"You understand, then, who is the suitor for the hand of your fair niece?" demanded Mr. Kallaway.

"Perfectly, my dear fellow!" cried the delighted Mr. Scuttle, of course believing that Mr. Kallaway had been pleading on his own account. "Say no more—I am agreeable—and I am sure my niece will be so as well."

Mr. Kallaway bestowed an hasty "Thank ye kindly: you've now made one man happy at least!" upon the good-natured Mr. Scuttle, and proceeded to inform Mr. Pickwick of the welcome news. This cheerful task was speedily accomplished: Mr. Pickwick was told that his suit had met with the most cordial reception at the hand of Mr. Scuttle; and while Mr. Kallaway hastened to attend to the preparations for the supper, our venerable old friend again sought Mrs. Weston's society, from which he had been for a moment summoned by his ambassador, and communicated the welcome tidings to her in as few words as possible.

In process of time the supper was served up, and the guests were summoned to partake of it. All answered the appeal, save and except Mr. Tracy Tupman; and he found it rather inconvenient to make his appearance at the table with a large trap at his feet. His absence was speedily noticed; and as it was getting somewhat dark, Mr. Kallaway procured a lanthorn, and hastened into the garden to search for him.

He looked into the stables where his horse was—he examined the receptacle for his fire-wood—he even took the precaution of inspecting the pig-stye—but no Mr. Tupman was to be found. At last the propriety of calling that gentleman's name aloud instigated itself to Mr. Kallaway. He accordingly bawled forth the magic word "Tupman" a plurality of times.

"Here!" returned a faint voice: "here I am."

"Where?" demanded Mr. Kallaway.

"Here!" answered Mr. Tupman. "In the loft over the cow-shed."

Mr. Kallaway hastened up the ladder that led to the loft, and there, to his horror and dismay, he discovered his respected guest in the painful situation before described.

"How the deuce came you here?" enquired Mr. Kallaway, when he had extricated Mr. Tupman from the trap by means of a key which he took from his waistcoat pocket.

"I—I—" began Mr. Tupman, blushing up to the eyes, "I felt rather sleepy—and so I thought—"

"If you'd only told me," said the farmer, "I would have conducted you to a sofa in a private room. But, come along: supper is waiting."

"It is scarcely necessary to say where you found me," observed Mr. Tupman, as they proceeded towards the house.

"Oh! no—certainly not," cried Mr. Kallaway, who, notwithstanding his promise, whispered the joke in the course of the evening, when he had drank about a bottle and a half of wine, to Mr. Scuttle, whence it gradually passed round the table, and Mr. Tupman was compelled to undergo the highly interesting ceremony of being thoroughly laughed at before the company separated.

The supper was substantial and good—the wines were excellent—and

the spirits of all present were exuberant. The evening was therefore an exceedingly pleasant one: Mr. Winkle and Mr. Siffkin flirted with the young ladies; Mr. Chitty imitated the chorus of the four winds to Mr. Kallaway; Mr. Walker demonstrated the infallibility of his system by eating enough to have satisfied four; Mr. Scuttle joked Mr. Tupman about the rat-trap; Mr. Pickwick was unremitting in his attentions to the fair widow; and that lady, in the course of the evening, favoured the party with the following air, which she had herself translated from the French of her favourite poet, Victor Hugo.

SONG.

Genius of France, if still thy wing
O'er Gallia's lands auspicious soar,
Peace to a wearied nation bring,
And let the war-note sound no more.
The boist'rous passions of the soul
Keep thou beneath a stern controul,
And calm tranquillity restore:
Repel the surge of civil strife,
Stop the sad waste of human life,
And banish discord from thy shore!

Let not the great despise the low,
The sufferer be more opprest;
Bid monarchs spare their subjects' woe,
Nor deeper wound the bleeding breast:—
Cast down the gibbet, dry the tears
Of orphans, and in future years
Thy guardian bounty will be blest;
So that amid the dreams of night
No horrors fill us with affright,
Nor wake us from a tranquil rest.

Mrs. Weston's beautiful song gave a fresh impulse to the conviviality of the evening; and as the exertion of singing had bestowed upon the widow a colour which not a little enhanced her beauty, so did the influence of the champagne confer upon her lover a gaiety and vivacity which almost carried him to the verge of attempting a song himself. But Mr. Hook Walker prudently whispered to his venerable friend "that singing ought not to form a part of his system;" and Mr. Kallaway proceeded to inform his guests that he should have the honour of complimenting the three illustrious men, whom he was proud to see at his board on that occasion, in a song purposely written the day before by their esteemed acquaintance, Mr. Septimus Chitty.

Hereupon a vast clattering of knives and glasses ensued to testify the universal satisfaction which was felt at Mr. Kallaway's announcement: Mr. Chitty looked very modest, and requested the worthy host "to *ignis via*—fire away;" and Messieurs Pickwick, Tupman, and Winkle, bestowed each a bow and a smile upon the company. So soon as order was restored, Mr. Kallaway commenced the following highly complimentary song.

SONG.

It is sweet to recline on the bank
Of a softly meandering stream,
Where the traveller often has drank,
And the primrose and butter-cup gleam.
But 'tis sweeter to hail at your board,
When the lamp's burning bright with its thick wick,
And when ev'ry decanter 's well stored,
Such a friend as the excellent Pickwick!

It is sweet to recline in a bower
With a maiden—the choice of your heart
When you're confident no human power
Can command you in haste to depart.
But 'tis sweeter to see by your side
One to whom you can say, "Fill your cup, man!"
While you feel that your guest is the pride
Of a nation that boasts of its Tupman!

It is sweet to read love in the eyes
Of a maiden returning your kiss;
It is sweet to respond to her sighs,—
But there 's happiness greater than this.
For 'tis sweeter libations of wine
To the glory of Friendship to sprinkle,
When the juices of Burgundy's vine
Are poured forth to the honour of Winkle!

Mr. Pickwick rose, in the name of himself and his two friends, to return thanks for this very handsome compliment. It was true that he and his companions had made some little noise in the world; and he felt proud to say that his travels in France were not less calculated to enhance his reputation, and that of his fellow-voyagers, than those in England. He had landed in Calais a stranger to France and the French: he had been triumphantly carried on the shoulders of the populace to his hotel; and during his residence in Paris he had met with a variety of adventures, all of which he should take care to put on record. (*Hear, hear!* and "*Illud eo est*—that's the go," *from Mr. Septimus Chitty.*) Mr. Pickwick thanked his friends for this renewal of applause. He repeated his words—he had met with strange adventures, and had seen strange sights. He had been taken up for a thief, because he once put on a brown wig; and he had trotted from the village of Boulogne to Paris upon a French donkey. He had had a string tied round his toes by some invisible agents at Maurice's hotel; and he had supped in a mad-house. How many—and he was proud to ask the question—how many of his fellow-countrymen, he should like to know, had done so much in so short a time? (*None—none!*) His friends had also met with *their* adventures, and had well earned *their* reputation. His friend Tupman had undertaken a journey to St. Omers under the most extraordinary circumstances, It was no use of his friend Tupman to kick him under the table: for his friend Tupman knew full well that this journey had been undertaken, and that the circumstances *were* extraordinary.) (*Yes — yes,— hear — hear!* and "So they were!" *from Mr. Winkle.*) Such were the claims of himself and his friends upon public notice; and it was his intention, with the

consent of his friends, to reside in Paris some time longer—perhaps a year, perhaps two—perhaps more—and to make himself perfectly acquainted with the French and their characteristics. He could not say that he was indifferent to reputation—but he was not so foolish as those travellers who, after a six weeks' residence in the metropolitan city of some country, return home and write a long account of the manners and customs of the people, whom they have scarcely had time to gaze upon, in two large volumes. *(Hurrah, hurrah—hear, hear!* and "Hurrah for old Pickwick," *from Mr. Hook Walker, who commenced his third bottle of champagne at the same time.)* Women were particularly addicted to this way of concocting books, for the purpose of putting money into the pockets of themselves and their publishers. He had understood that a lady, well known in the literary world, he believed, as Mrs. Baggage, had compiled many volumes after this method. This lady was in the habit of visiting large cities, partaking of the hospitality of the inhabitants, and then abusing them in her writings as if they had treated her with every indignity. He himself recollected that upon one occasion he sent his servant to the tobacconist's for some snuff, about ten days after a new work by this lady had appeared, and the snuff was brought to him in a leaf of her identical book. He perused it, and was so disgusted with its contents that he ordered his servant to tell the tobacconist he would not deal with him any more if he sent his articles in such paper as that. And what did the company think was the tobacconist's insolent reply? Why, the fellow sent back to say that he could not comply with his (Mr. Pickwick's) request, as he had bought three hundred and fifty copies of the work, at twopence a volume, for waste-paper, and should have no different sort of paper till some other great author, whom he named, wrote a new book. *(Hear, hear!)*

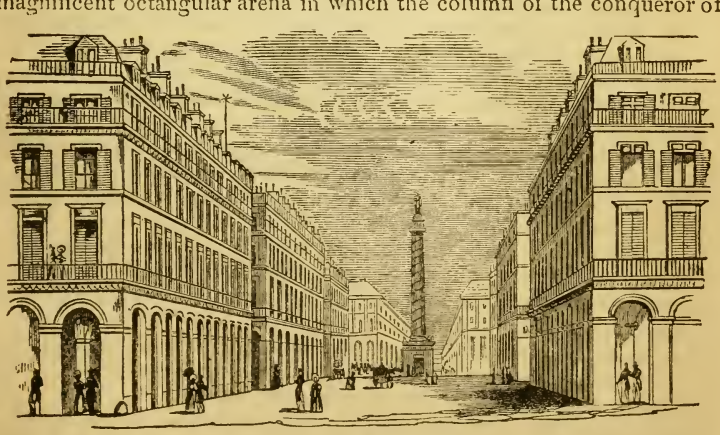
Mr. Pickwick paused for a moment; and having gathered breath, he wound up his luminous discourse in the following manner. Mr. Pickwick would not detain his friends another moment. ("An hour if you like," *from Mr. Hook Walker, who drank off another glass of champagne.)* He did not intend to imitate such scribes as those to whom he had alluded. Nor should he publish his works under his own name. He should prepare notes, and put them into the hands of able editors who would print them in a proper manner. He once more begged to thank Mr. Kallaway for the compliment he had paid to him (Mr. Pickwick) and his two friends; and he would conclude by promising not to forget the events of that evening in his "Memoirs."

The applause which succeeded this splendid oration, shook the house to its very foundation, alarming the birds on the pantiles and the cats in the cellar. Mr. Hook Walker was so overcome with the speech he had just heard, or the champagne which he had drunk, that he absolutely fell helplessly from his chair, and gave vent to his emotions under the table. Mr. Tupman did not look exceedingly well pleased; Mr. Winkle eyed his great leader with the utmost respect; Mr. Scuttle began clapping a young lady upon the back as if it were Mr. Pickwick's, and did not discover his error till her brother threatened to knock him down; Mr. Siffkin wiped his eyes, into which the strength of the Madeira he was drinking had brought large tears; and

Mr. Chitty declared that such enlightened society as that in which he then found himself, was sufficient to expel *ceruleos diabolos*—the blue devils, from any one in the world.

To be brief, the evening was a most pleasant one; and at about half-past eleven several hackney-coaches were summoned from the nearest stand to convey the guests to their respective abodes. Mr. Scuttle was delighted at the supposed affection of Mr. Kallaway for his niece, and he did not forget to joke him upon the subject as he took his leave. Mr. Kallaway imagined that the *bon mot* referred to Mr. Pickwick, and laughed accordingly; and thereupon he parted with the company in the best of all possible humours.

Mr. Siffkin must now for a moment occupy our attention; for Mr. Siffkin, having been conveyed as far as the Rue Royale Saint Honoré in the coach occupied by Mr. Scuttle and his niece, was compelled to perform the rest of his journey on foot, as he resided at a hotel in the Place Vendôme. He accordingly put his best foot foremost, and walked rapidly up the Rue St. Honoré towards the Rue de Castiglione Arrived in this latter street, he stood a moment to survey the splendid scene that lay around him. The tall column was irradiated by the beams of a lovely moon, which also glittered upon the gilded spears of the gardens of the Tuileries; and the white buildings of the Rue de Castiglione, with their magnificent arcades, appeared like the entrance to the marble cities of which we read in oriental tales. The banner of France hung over the gate of the hotel occupied by the Minister of Finance; and the sounds of revelry and of music issued from the lordly halls of that gorgeous abode. There is no city in the universe which affords so splendid a view as that formed by the locality we are now briefly describing. The eye surveys a line of noble streets—a magnificent octangular arena in which the column of the conqueror of



Europe rears its proud head to the heavens—the foliage of the palace gardens beyond the Rue de Rivoli at one extremity of the prospect, and the tall trees of the Boulevards at the other. The spectator is compelled to admire the height, the architecture, and the regularity of the buildings—his liveliest recollections are awakened by that tall

monument of a thousand victories which embellishes the Place Vendôme—and he feels that he is in a city of magnificence and of splendour.

Mr. Siffkin tarried for some time to admire that prospect, so beautiful in the moon-light, ere he proceeded to his hotel; and at the moment when he was about to resume his short walk towards that establishment, he was accosted by two gentlemen in the following manner.

"I see, Sir, that you are an Englishman," said the stouter one of the two in a familiar tone of voice.

"I am, Sir," said Mr. Siffkin with a very polite bow.

"So are we—ain't we, Jopling?" exclaimed the stout gentleman, inflicting a hard thump quite unnecessarily, according to the ideas of Mr. Nassau Siffkin, upon his companion's back.

"I should rather think we are, old fellow," responded Mr. Jopling; and he and Mr. Lipman, whom the reader has doubtless already recognised, laughed so heartily that Mr. Siffkin really began to believe something very witty was going on, but where he could not precisely ascertain.

"Do you hang out near here?" enquired Mr. Lipman, when his mirth had somewhat subsided.

Mr. Siffkin intimated that he was appended to the Hotel du Rhin, at that moment.

"Will you step round the corner, then, to Lawson's hotel—Lawson is a devilish good fellow—and take a glass of the invariable?" politely demanded Mr. Lipman.

"The vernacular, as I call it," said Mr. Jopling, whose face was more bloated than ever. "Lawson has excellent Dunkirk gin at his smithy."

"I really am exceedingly indebted to you, gentlemen," responded Mr. Siffkin: "but upon my word—may I for ever lose the sight of these hazel optics of mine—"

"What does he say, Lipman?" asked Mr. Jopling.

"That he won't go with us—it's too far," immediately replied Mr. Lipman; "but that we shall accompany him. So here's for it;"—and with a horse-laugh and great coolness of manner, Messieurs Lipman and Jopling seized each an arm of Mr. Nassau Siffkin, and dragged that gentleman to his hotel before he could utter a syllable of objection or assent.

"Now, what shall we take, old chap?" said Mr. Lipman to his friend Mr. Jopling, when these gentlemen and Mr. Siffkin were safely anchored in the private sitting-room of the latter. "Have you any objection to a bowl of punch?"

"Really, gentlemen," urged Mr. Siffkin, referring to his watch—

"Devilish glad you ain't in a hurry, old boy," replied Mr. Lipman, dealing an awful poke in the ribs to Mr. Siffkin. "So let's have a bowl of punch:"—and without any more ado, but with a great deal of ease, Mr. Lipman summoned the waiter, and commanded him to bring, on the shortest possible notice, the largest possible bowl of brandy punch.

"And a dozen of your best cigars," added Mr. Jopling. We'll make ourselves comfortable, at all events What do *you* say, Lipman?"

Mr. Lipman did not say anything; but he did a great deal for he took Mr. Siffkin's best hat-box to maintain his right leg with—he placed Mr. Siffkin's dressing-case on the floor to support his left—and he fetched a pillow from Mr. Siffkin's bed-room adjoining to ease his back. Mr. Jopling eyed these preparations with infinite delight, and bursting forth into an immoderate fit of laughter, he swore that "they'd make a night of it."

The punch was brought, so were the cigars; and Messieurs Lipman and Jopling commenced a desperate attack on both. Mr. Siffkin surveyed their proceedings with a look of the most unfeigned despair He abominated smoking more than any one thing in the known world, save and except, perhaps, a boa constrictor, or some such silly triflet and the sight of those two men, who seemed determined upon monopolising his room and society (with the latter of which they might probably have dispensed, and called for more punch instead), rendered him absolutely speechless with mingled indignation and disgust. The conversation, however, speedily took a turn which awoke his slumbering interests, inasmuch as it especially regarded his germinating affection for Mrs. Weston, and his deeply-rooted jealousy of his successful rival, Mr. Samuel Pickwick.

"Excellent punch, this," said Mr. Lipman, as he emptied one tumbler of the rosy liquor, and helped himself to another.

"Admirable," assented Mr. Jopling: and then both gentlemen smoked their cigars for some time in silence.

"I wonder what's become of old Pickwick," said Mr. Jopling, suddenly breaking the temporary silence.

"So do I," was Mr. Lipman's enlightened answer. "How long is it since we saw him in Saint Pelagie?"

"Eh? what's that?" cried Mr. Siffkin, awaking as it were from a long lethargy. "Is not that the debtor's prison?"

"I should think so," responded Mr. Lipman; and the reader will recollect that it was no wonder that he did.

"Was Pickwick in a debtor's prison?" demanded Mr. Nassau Siffkin, now no longer grudging the punch and cigars to his singular guests.

"Was he not—that's all? eh—Jopling?" cried Mr. Lipman, winking significantly to his friend, to imply that their host had better not be permitted to know that they themselves were the prisoners in Saint Pelagie.

"Ah! wasn't he though?" said Mr. Jopling, with a mysterious shake of the head.

"Was he there for much?" enquired Mr. Siffkin, rubbing his hands with delight.

"Much! I believe you he was," answered Mr. Lipman. "Why, he's the most extravagant fellow on the face of the earth!"

"The greatest swindler I know," added Mr. Jopling coolly sipping his punch.

"Never was such an arrant old knave," continued Mr. Lipman.

"Gad, isn't he a rum 'un? ejaculated Mr. Jopling.

"With his gaiters too," said Mr. Lipman.

"And his tights," cried Mr. Jopling.

"And his spectacles," pursued Mr. Lipman.

"And his philanthropy," superadded Mr. Jopling.

And having thus uttered a catalogue of the most gratuitous and unpardonable falsehoods under the canopy of heaven, the two gentlemen emptied the first bowl of punch and rung for a second, just as the neighbouring clocks struck half-past two.

Now Mr. Siffkin was delighted at having met with Messrs. Lipman and Jopling, because they had given him information relative to Mr. Pickwick's character, which he fondly hoped would for ever ruin that gentleman in the opinion of Mr. Scuttle and his niece. But Mr. Siffkin gradually became sleepy; and he by no means felt any accessory to his pleasure or comfort when the waiter made his appearance with another bowl of hot brandy-punch.

"You haven't a cold fowl in the house, waiter, have you?" enquired Mr. Lipman, just as that functionary was about to leave the room.

"Oh! certainly, Sir," said the waiter with an obsequious bow.

"Walk him up, then," ejaculated Mr. Jopling in that figurative kind of language which many young English gentlemen have, during late years, so tastefully adopted.

The waiter accordingly walked down stairs, and then walked up the cold fowl. Mr. Siffkin was in despair; but Messieurs Lipman and Jopling manfully disdained to take the smallest notice of him, and commenced a vigorous assault upon the edible before them.

"I say, old boy, what's your name, though?" enquired Mr. Jopling, suddenly recollecting that there was a third person present.

"Siffkin—Nassau Siffkin, at your service," was the answer, delivered in a miserable tone of voice, for Mr. Lipman's right foot had just gone through the roof of the hat-box.

"Well, then, Siffkin—here's your health," said Mr. Jopling; and he nodded familiarly to his host ere he tossed off another tumbler of punch.

"Now for one more cigar," exclaimed Mr. Lipman, as he made an end of eating, because he had finished the fowl.

"Really, gentlemen," began Mr. Siffkin, sitting very uneasily in his chair: "I—I—am exceedingly—"

"Oh! if you're tired, go to bed, Siffkin," interrupted Mr. Jopling "We'll make ourselves very comfortable. Never do you fear."

Relative to this there really did not appear to be any ground of alarm; for two more comfortable-looking individuals have seldom been seen at a similar hour and occupation in any age or time. There was no alternative but patiently to await their departure: so Mr. Siffkin sate listening to the ticking of the time-piece and his own watch; and every now and then the monotony of those sounds was broken by an observation which fell from the lips of one of his guests. There was, however, a great sameness prevalent throughout those remarks, the principal topic of which was an anathema against a cigar which wouldn't light, or the rapid disappearance of the punch.

At length four o'clock struck, and then Messieurs Lipman and Jopling came to the conclusion "that it was about time to go:" whereupon they wished Mr. Siffkin a valediction which they were pleased to call a "Good night," and retired with a promise to visit him again in a few days.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A CHAPTER WHICH IS EXCEEDINGLY NECESSARY TO THESE MEMOIRS, AND IN WHICH THE READER WILL PROBABLY FIND SOME AMUSEMENT.

Mr. Pickwick had now many matters to occupy his attention. He was determined to interest himself in the behalf of the unhappy lady whose manuscript he had perused with feelings of such deep emotion; and he was not the less anxious to bring his own little love-affair with Mrs. Weston to a termination. He, however, deemed it prudent to inform his friends of his intended change of condition; and, with his usual prudence and forethought, he chose the propitious moment when both Mr. Tupman and Mr. Winkle were as sulky as two young bears, by reason of an insult which they had just before experienced at the hands of a couple of drunken English grooms on the Boulevards.

"I never was so insulted in my life," cried Mr. Tupman, wiping away the perspiration from his very expressive countenance.

"To be called such names, too!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, throwing himself upon Mr. Pickwick's sympathies and an easy chair.

"What was it they said we were, Tupman?"

"D——d scoundrels, I think," was that gentleman's reply

"Infamous!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "But let us not reflect upon the petty evils of life," continued this truly great man in his usual emphatic tone.

"I've got such a terrible corn on the little toe of my right foot," observed Mr. Tupman, with a very wry face.

"Use Wiggle's *Unadulterated Balm of the Carribee Islands*," suggested Mr. Winkle, his countenance still flushed with the glow of indignation excited by the two drunken grooms aforesaid.

"As I was saying," continued Mr. Pickwick, "let us be above the petty evils of life. Great men despise the inebriate follies of their inferiors, and laugh at the anguish occasioned by tight boots and corns. My dear friends, I have something very important to communicate to you," added Mr. Pickwick in a solemn tone of voice which made a deep impression upon the minds of his two auditors.

"Nothing wrong, I hope," cried Mr. Winkle, turning very pale. "Arabella and all quite well?"

"Your family, my young friend," continued Mr. Pickwick, "is in perfect health. It is of myself that I wish to speak to you."

"I hope you don't intend to return home yet, after what you said at Kallaway's the other night," cried Mr. Tupman.

"No, Tupman," was Mr. Pickwick's answer; "but I propose to make an important change in my condition."

"You won't leave off the black gaiters?" exclaimed Mr. Winkle in breathless anxiety.

"Nor the tights?" said Mr. Tupman, considerably alarmed.

"Consider your reputation," implored Mr. Winkle.

"Which would be at stake without the tights," added Mr. Tupman.

"No, my dear friends," cried Mr. Pickwick, softened even to tears by these demonstrations of regard and attachment; "the gaiters and the tights are inseparable from the name of Pickwick. But there are other changes to be effected in the conditions of men—"

"Yes—the hat!" said Mr. Winkle in a mournful voice.

"Or the eye-glass," suggested Mr. Tupman: then feeling that he ought to possess some influence over his great leader, and that the time was come to exercise it, he added in a serious and impressive tone, "Pickwick, I implore you not to introduce any change in your attire. Think of the consequences to ourselves—to posterity—and to the world in general!"

And having uttered this sublime adjuration, Mr. Tupman threw himself back in his chair and got up a little scene with a couple of tears and a white pocket-handkerchief. It was a most interesting moment! There stood the great hero of these Memoirs with his mouth half-open, expressive of astonishment at his friends' grief—on one side sate Nathaniel Winkle with so rueful a countenance that no one could doubt the truth of his having worked himself up to a very melo-dramatic and affecting pitch of misery—and on the other was Tracy Tupman, with his mind buried in meditation, and his face in a handkerchief. Had Davidge of the Surrey Theatre only contemplated that scene for one single instant, he would have closed his next play with an imitative *tableau*, calculated to bring tears into even the eyes of the hard-hearted costermonger or reckless scavenger of St. George's Fields!

"Tupman—no more of this: Winkle, I conjure you," said Mr. Pickwick after a long pause; but Mr. Pickwick did not inform Mr. Winkle what he so earnestly solicited him to perform.

"I am tranquil now," murmured Mr. Tupman; and indeed it was a wonder that he had ever been otherwise.

"Pray keep us in suspense no longer," cried Mr. Winkle.

"I will not, my dear friends," said Mr. Pickwick. "The change to which I alluded is simply this. I am going—that is, I have some thoughts of being—"

"What!" exclaimed Messieurs. Tupman and Winkle in a breath.

"Married!" said Mr. Pickwick; and he coolly contemplated the countenances of his friends, one after the other, devoting at least a minute to each survey.

"Married!" screamed Mr. Winkle.

"Married!" shouted Mr. Tupman.

"Married!" echoed Mr. Pickwick, a smile of benevolence curling his lip. "And to the loveliest of her sex. I beg you to look upon Mrs. Weston as my intended wife."

Mr. Tupman stared at his venerable friend in stupid astonishment; and Mr. Winkle, fearful that the senses of the said venerable friend were a little deranged, jumped from his chair with considerable alacrity, seized the fire-tongs and ran to the opposite side of the room, so as to be near the door in case any more convincing proofs of approaching insanity should develop themselves.

But Mr. Pickwick looked and spoke anything but like a mad person.

"I see that you are astonished," said this extraordinary man, not

for one moment losing his usual presence of mind: "and it is very natural that you should be so. But we shall not the less continue to travel together and enjoy the blessings of each other's society—"

At this moment Mr. Pickwick was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Samuel Weller and a letter. The latter was placed in Mr. Pickwick's hands; and the former disappeared so soon as he had acquitted himself of the little duty he had been requested by a messenger from Mr. Scuttle to perform.

"Why—how is this?—God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, as his eye glanced over the contents of the epistle. "What *can* this mean?"—and he turned the letter several times over in his hands, when he had finished the perusal of it. He then examined the superscription and the place where he had torn it by the seal; and finished by giving it to Mr. Tupman, who read it aloud for the behoof of Mr. Winkle. And these were the contents.

"Mr. Scuttle presents his compliments to Mr. Pickwick, and regrets that the information he has lately received relative to Mr. Pickwick, from Mr. Siffkin, will compel him to decline the honour of Mr. Pickwick's acquaintance in future. This resolution is also the more peremptorily to be acted upon, inasmuch as the approaching change in Mrs. Weston's condition renders a more strict circumspection necessary in the selection of the future Mrs. Kallaway's friends."

"This is very extraordinary," said Mr. Tupman, folding up the letter, and returning it to Mr. Pickwick.

"Very," assented Mr. Winkle.

"There is some mistake," observed Mr. Pickwick; "and Siffkin is at the bottom of it. He has been traducing our characters to our most intimate friends, and Kallaway himself has been also playing the traitor. I understand it all now."

"I'm very glad you do," said Mr. Winkle; "for I'm sure I do not."

"I'll call upon Scuttle this very moment, and have an immediate explanation," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick. "Wait here till my return."

Mr. Pickwick placed his hat upon his head, his spectacles upon his nose, and his gloves upon his hands, and walked hastily up the Boulevards to the Rue Taitbout. He found that Mr. Scuttle was at home; and on being introduced to the drawing-room, became aware of the pleasing fact that he stood in the presence of that gentleman himself, Mr. Siffkin, and Mr. Kallaway. Mr. Pickwick bowed politely to the triumvirate; but the recognition of his civility on their part was cold and distant.

"I have just received a very singular letter from you, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, addressing himself to Mr. Scuttle; "and have come to demand an explanation of its contents."

"Very just—very just, Mr. Pickwick," exclaimed Mr. Scuttle, fidgetting somewhat upon his chair. "The fact is, that my friend Siffkin here has heard most strange reports, Mr. Pickwick—and—and he communicated them to me last night. They made me so nervous, I can assure you, that when I retired for the night, I put the candle into the bed and stood myself in the grate, and did not detect my error till I tried to snuff myself out."

"Well, I recollect when old Clumley, my father-in-law, took the

black and white boar for a ghost," observed Mr. Kallaway; "and if Harry Simmons hadn't called up the boy that slept in the stable—"

"Gentlemen," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick impatiently, "my business has no reference to fits of absence of mind, nor to black and white boars—"

"Clumley bought it of Sam Marshal, who was afterwards transported for knowing too much," said Mr. Kallaway.

"Nor to transported felons," continued Mr. Pickwick, indignantly frowning at the ex-grazier and farmer; "but to my character, which has evidently been basely traduced, and to the villany of an individual to whom I entrusted a most delicate message, which, it appears, he delivered in favour of himself."

"Mr. Pickwick," said Mr. Scuttle mildly, "why did you deceive us? Could you not have frankly acknowledged that you had been in Saint Pelagie for debt?"

"I!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, fire flashing from his eyes through his spectacles, which instruments alone prevented Mr. Scuttle from being singed to death by those caloric emanations of wrath; "I—in Saint Pelagie! No—Sir—never as a prisoner—never, Sir."

"You don't happen to know two gentlemen named Lipman and Jopling—do you?" enquired Mr. Nassau Siffkin, with a leer.

"Yes, Sir—I *do* know such individuals as those you mention," rejoined Mr Pickwick; "and let me add at the same time, that my opinion of them is not very high. A friend of mine was for some weeks a prisoner in Saint Pelagie—or the New Prison, I believe they call it—and on several occasions I visited him there. It was then that I became acquainted with Mr. Lipman and Mr. Jopling."

"There is some mistake here," suggested Mr. Scuttle.

"I really begin to think that I have been deceived," observed Mr. Nassau Siffkin, looking very foolish.

"Gad, so was old Clumley, when he fired at the black and white boar," said Mr. Kallaway, deeming that an illustration of Mr. Siffkin's remark would not be misplaced. "It would have been a great pity if he'd killed the poor beast; for such a lovely animal I never did see. Why, what do you think our vicar said to me the day after he preached that sermon against the 'squire for having refused to be present at the vestry dinner where his reverence presided, and where we all got so precious drunk?"

"I, for one, neither know nor care," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "But now that I have settled one portion of the contents of this letter, allow me to make an observation upon another."

"Certainly," said Mr. Scuttle. "But won't you sit down? There's a chair behind you. You needn't do as I did the other day, though -put your hat upon the chair, and go and hang yourself to the peg outside the door."

"Talk not to me of chairs, and pegs, and doors," cried Mr. Pickwick; "but explain—or rather let Mr. Kallaway explain how Mrs. Weston is to exchange her name for his; and let him not seek a subterfuge in his black and white boars, or his blue boars, or his green boars!"—and Mr. Pickwick awaited a reply with a stern composure.

"There is another mistake somewhere, now," exclaimed Mr. Kal-

laway. "I always said that Pickwick was an upright and honourable man, in spite of what Mr. Siffkin had heard against him; and although he don't like me to mention anything about the black and white boar, I can assure him that Richard Holloway, the turnpike man —"

"Peruse that letter, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, handing Mr. Scuttle's effusion to Mr. Kallaway.

"Upon my honour," cried Mr. Kallaway, "I delivered your message as correctly to Mr. Scuttle as you gave it to me;" and the ex-farmer and grazier detailed the conversation which took place between himself and Mr. Scuttle on the evening of the memorable entertainment at the cottage in the Batignolles.

"Nothing but cross-purposes," said Mr. Scuttle, who now began to understand the errors under which they had all been severally labouring; "and so, after all, Pickwick is to be my nephew. Well—don't let him do what I did about five-and-twenty years ago. I ran away with the bride's-maid, and left the bride to catch her death with cold in the church, waiting for me. The best of it was, I never found out my mistake till I was condemned to pay a thousand pounds for breach of promise of marriage."

"May my hair for ever lose its natural curl, if this isn't the most extraordinary thing that ever yet happened," remarked Mr. Nassau Siffkin, who suddenly saw all his hopes of possessing Miss Weston vanish into the air.

"I didn't tell you what the vicar said to me," exclaimed Mr. Kallaway, thinking that this was a happy moment to conclude his anecdote. "'Kallaway,' said he, 'that boar of your father-in-law's is the pride of the country.'—'Thank your reverence,' said I, 'for your reverence's good opinion.'—'Yes,' said he; 'and the next time the black sow litters, keep a sharp look-out upon Master Sherrin; and if he pulls down any more planks from your pig-stye, tell me of it, and I'll put him into the Spiritual Court.'—That was very kind of the vicar; especially as he'd lost something in the tithes when the little ones were drowned in Sam Whitfield's pond."

"And, pray, does Mrs. Weston know of all that has passed?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, delighted that matters had thus been brought to so amicable an understanding.

"Oh! no," answered Mr. Scuttle. "Immediately after Siffkin informed me last night of what he had been told a few evenings ago, I wrote the note which you got just now. I should have had a talk with my niece upon these matters in the course of the afternoon; but am glad that the thing is arranged as it is. Ain't you, Siffkin?"

"Oh! very," answered that gentleman, with a look which did anything but corroborate his assertion.

"But Richard Holloway, the turnpike-man, declared that ever since he'd had the situation given to him as a recompence for not having gone forward as a witness on the Coroner's inquest, in that affair where the two paupers were starved to death —"

Mr. Pickwick did not stay to hear the remainder of Mr. Kallaway's anecdote: he shook hands with the three gentlemen one after the other, desired Mr. Scuttle to give his best love to Mrs. Weston, and hastened home to communicate the result of his visit to his two friends, who anxiously awaited his return.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ARRIVAL OF ANOTHER CELEBRATED PERSONAGE IN FRANCE.—THE COUNT BOLOSKI OF BOLOSK, AND MADEMOISELLE LOVEMINSKI.—CONVERSATION, A SONG, AND OTHER INTELLECTUAL AMUSEMENTS AND PASTIMES.

Boulogne-sur-Mer, as far as regards the English portion of its inhabitants, stands with respect to Calais in the same way in which the Queen's Bench may be compared to the Fleet prison. Boulogne is the receptacle for the more gentlemanly and accomplished allotment of those English swindlers and black-legs who visit the continent, because they find it somewhat inconvenient to reside in their own country; whereas the coarse and the low adventurer contents himself with Calais. The very equipages which may be seen in the streets of Boulogne denote the characters of their proprietors: the liveries of their servants are also another means of betraying the secret of temporary credit at a tailor's, and a certainty of the said tailor losing every *item* of his account. The individuals who grace the open carriages and phaetons just now alluded to, are fine specimens of the impudent and unprincipled portion of mankind. The men wear fierce whiskers, fur collars to their coats in winter, and velvet fronts in summer, satin stocks, straw-coloured gloves, and empty green purses (always) in their pockets. The ladies are decorated with pink crape bonnets in July, and green velvet ones in January; and their dress and manners altogether assimilate much with those unfortunate females who parade the streets of London. The *Agnus-Castus*, or Chaste-Tree, might be planted with considerable advantage in the principal streets and squares at Boulogne; for in no town under heaven is the protection of its shade and the influence of its presence more required than in this. The French portion of the inhabitants scrupulously avoid all connexion with the English: the only class of citizens that transact any business at all in Boulogne with our fellow-countrymen residing there, are the bailiffs and the gaoler of the debtor's prison. With them the English are tolerably intimate, in consequence of the frequent intercourse that takes place between them.

But the English in Boulogne are not very particular amongst themselves; that is to say, they even cheat, and traduce, in their own little domestic circles, with as much unconcern and independence as if they had already arrived at Botany Bay, which eventually proves to be their usual place of destination. Few of the couples living together as husband and wife have deemed it necessary to go through the fatiguing ceremony of marriage, which is so generally esteemed elsewhere; and the young ladies do not suffer themselves to be at all uneasy when they make a slight addition to the population of the town without their offspring being born in lawful wedlock. These manners and customs certainly savour of primitive freedom and independence: but they are, however, supposed to be occasionally accompanied by a few slight disadvantages.

Duels are of very frequent occurrence in this liberal community. Their causes are, for the most part, accusations of cheating at cards, the seduction of an individual's mistress or daughter, the trifling offence which one gentleman commits when he tells another, in unvarnished language, that he has uttered an untruth, or in some such every day occurrences, which speak so well and so much for the civilization and progressive improvement of the age we live in. The principal amusements of the gentlemen in Boulogne are gaming and getting drunk: those of the ladies, flirting and scandal—all equally innocent in their way, and absolutely necessary to the well-being of a fashionable community. The only variation to these modes of pastime is walking on the quay or pier, to see the steam-boats arrive, and exhibit a new cloak or bonnet which the tailor or milliner, with an extent of faith sufficient to remove several mountains, has sent home the night before upon credit.

In the middle of the Rue de l'Ecu, in the good town of Boulogne-sur-Mer, stands the Hotel du Nord; and on the occasion which we seize to introduce our readers thither, a tall slim young gentleman was standing in the middle of the court-yard of this splendid hotel.

"What time did you say the diligence starts?" demanded the tall slim young gentleman, whose age might be about six or seven-and-twenty, and who carried over his arm a large cloak with a canine-skin collar.

"At five dis evening," was the reply, given by a French Commissioner, who had pounced upon the English gentleman the moment he landed from the packet, and dragged him by force to the Hotel du Nord.

"Will you see about my luggage, then, if you please?" continued the tall gentleman; "and take me a place in the *coupé* (as I think they call it) for this evening?"

"Vary well, milord," said the Commissioner. "But vot your name, for me see ar'ter your von trunk?"

"Snodgrass—Mr. Augustus Snodgrass," was the answer.

A gentleman, with large black whiskers, who had been lounging in the court-yard while the above dialogue was going on, now stepped up to Mr. Snodgrass, and addressed him with that ease and familiarity often adopted by modern travellers.

"Going to Paris to-night?" demanded the gentleman.

Mr. Snodgrass replied in the affirmative.

"Know the language?" was the next question.

A negative was the answer in its turn.

"Wouldn't like to go in a post-chaise, eh? It's a devilish deal better than humbugging in that cursed diligence, as the baronet used to say," continued the gentleman with the black whiskers; "and if you choose to go halves in the expense, I'm your man—and no mistake."

Mr. Snodgrass reflected for a moment that he was ignorant of the French language, and that the stranger appeared to be a very gentlemanly, though somewhat off-hand, individual; he accordingly made a few enquiries about the expense of travelling post, &c., and eventually consented to accompany his new acquaintance in the manner proposed.

"Snodgrass is your name I believe," said the gentleman, leading

tne way into the coffee-room. "I think I've heard some of my friends mention that name before—but I can't recollect who or when. Mine is Boloski—Count Boloski of Bolosk, Varsovitch: I'm a Pole by birth, but I speak the English and French languages fluently."

Mr. Snodgrass bowed with great respect to Count Boloski, and felicitated himself in his own mind that he had fallen in with a nobleman of so distinguished a rank on his first arrival in France. He had heard that the foreign title of Count is equivalent to our's of Earl; and he immediately assumed a most complacent smile and graceful attitude in the presence of the Polish peer.

"Has your lordship been long in France?" demanded Mr. Snodgrass, by way of saying something.

"I only came yesterday," returned the Count. "But I pass five or six months every year in this country, and usually travel post. I hate the trouble of valets, and carriages of your own, and all that. Comfort is my study, as the Great—as my friend, Prince Poniatowski used to say," added the Count, correcting himself towards the termination of the sentence.

'Your lordship is quite right—comfort is the essential," said Mr Snodgrass. "Thank you, my lord;" and Mr. Snodgrass took a pinch of snuff from a box which the Count presented to him.

"This box is a great curiosity," observed the Count, carelessly consigning it to his pocket. 'It belonged to the Marquis of Bilkokrankovitch, my great, great, great, grandfather; and it saved his life at the battle of Killorlas by turning a musket ball when in his waistcoat-pocket. That's the reason I value it; or else it's no great beauty."

This last statement was a self-evident truth; for the snuff-box, although so highly prized, had every appearance of being an old three-and-sixpenny article worn and discoloured by long use. Mr. Snodgrass, however, viewed it with the most profound respect and admiration.

"Two o'clock," said the Count, musing, as he drew a watch from his fob: then, in an apparently reckless manner, he added, "Here's another heir-loom which I value more than a thousand gold repeaters set round with pearls. This watch belonged to my great-grandfather's grandfather's mother's sister's uncle, the general who beat the Russians in the sanguinary combat of Slayemorlovitch."

"How very much it resembles one of the cheap English hunting-watches," observed Mr. Snodgrass, surveying this curiosity with the same respect he had bestowed upon the snuff-box.

"Yes—so it does," exclaimed Count Boloski: "I never noticed that coincidence before. But since our minds are made up to go post, we'll just order some dinner and then start in the cool of the evening. We shall get to Paris to-morrow night. You go to some hotel, of course?"

"My friends have lodgings in Paris," said Mr. Snodgrass, with a slight hesitation. "They live in the Rue Royale, where your lordship will always be welcome. But perhaps your lordship has already heard of the name of Pickwick? He has made a little noise in the world."

'Pickwick!" exclaimed the Count, with a sudden start. "Oh! decidedly—I know that great man well—by name."

"He is my friend," continued Mr. Snodgrass, delighted to perceive by the Count's manner, as well as his words, that the exploits of the illustrious hero of these Memoirs were so extensively known. "He has been upon the Continent some time; but his universal philanthropy has led him into acts of generosity which have been greatly abused by unprincipled men. There was one Crashem—Adolphus Crashem," continued Mr. Snodgrass, "who swindled him and our other friends, Tupman and Winkle, to a great amount."

"The scoundrel!" exclaimed Count Boloski, with an emphasis which admirably displayed his abhorrence of Mr. Adolphus Crashem's conduct.

The Count, having thus given vent to his indignation at the moral turpitude of a degraded fellow-creature, proceeded to order dinner with a great deal of pomposity and ceremony, which Mr. Snodgrass thought were the necessary qualifications of a nobleman. The repast was speedily served up; and a very copious one it was. The Count ordered the most expensive wines, and drank his share of them with a facility and speed which quite astonished his companion. He told a number of anecdotes relative to his high and mighty ancestors, invited Mr. Snodgrass to accompany him into Poland and stay with him at his paternal castle of Bolosk, and proved himself to be one of the most condescending and generous noblemen living. In process of time the dinner was discussed, the carriage ready, and the bills made out, respectively, for the Count and Mr. Snodgrass.

"Got change for a hundred pound Bank of England note?" demanded Count Boloski of the waiter, as he took his purse from his pocket and flourished it round his hand.

"No, milord, I have not," answered the waiter. "We cannot change a note for such an amount."

"That's devilish awkward," said the Count, referring to his bill. "One hundred and sixty-seven francs—and I have but a couple of napoleons in gold, and no silver."

"If your lordship," began Mr. Snodgrass—

"Eh? did you speak?" cried the Count.

"If your lordship would allow me to offer you—"

"Oh! can you oblige me with change?" interrupted the Count, having instant recourse to his purse, in one end of which was a playbill of the Strand Theatre, which looked uncommonly like a heap of bank-notes.

"I don't think I can, my lord," replied Mr. Snodgrass. "But if your lordship would accept a part—we can easily settle on the road—"

"Oh! very easily—very easily, indeed," exclaimed his lordship "Nothing's more easy, I declare. I'll just take a cool thousand;" and he helped himself to ten piles of twenty five-franc-pieces each, which stood on the table before Mr. Snodgrass.

The bills were now speedily settled, the two gentlemen stepped into the carriage, the postilion cracked his whip like a madman, and in a few minutes the town of Boulogne was far behind.

"Cozie travelling, this," observed the Count.

"Very, my lord," said Mr. Snodgrass. "Has your lordship travelled much?"

"All over the world, Sir," was the instantaneous reply. "I was employed on a mission to the Emperor of China some time ago, by the Czar of Russia. The fact is, we wanted to make a rail-road from St. Petersburg to Peking; but the narrow-minded Chinese Government wouldn't agree to it because they would be obliged to knock down a part of their great wall, and thus allow my friend the Cham of Tartary to penetrate into the country with his barbarous hordes."

"Are the Chinese good poets, my lord?" enquired Mr. Snodgrass, peculiarly edified with this conversation.

"Oh! yes—tolerably," was the answer. "There's Southi-fum, who wrote an entire epic poem in six weeks, about some heroine or another. He's poet-laureate to the Emperor; and if he has a single fault, it is that he has purloined every idea he ever clothed in words from his brother-poets. Next there's—"

"Don't you think this a very dull part of the road?" interrupted Mr. Snodgrass, as they left Samer, where they had changed horses, a couple of miles behind them.

"Just the spot on which I was robbed three years ago," coolly observed the Count; "and where the old nobleman, his wife, and seventeen lovely infants were all massacred by banditti about six weeks back."

"You—you—don't think—there s—really—any cause for alarm?" whispered Mr. Snodgrass.

"The devil I don't!" exclaimed the Count. "But I do, though."

"God bless us both!" murmured Mr. Snodgrass, falling back in the vehicle, and giving vent to the most piteous lamentations.

"Thank heavens, I have my pistols," said the Count, putting his hands into his great-coat pockets, and drawing them out again. "Gad, they'd have a little difficulty to get my purse out of me! I'd die first, as General—as the Great Cham used to say."

"You wouldn't—you couldn't do me such a favour—Oh! no—I dare not ask you!" said Mr. Snodgrass: "your lordship would think I was too bold."

"Speak—my dear friend—speak!" cried the Count, with the most affectionate interest. "In a moment we may be attacked—and any thing that I can do to serve you, I will."

"My—my purse, my lord," murmured Mr. Snodgrass, handing that useful little piece of portable furniture to the Count: "would you keep it for me?'

"Oh! certainly," returned the Count, with amiable condescension: "most certainly!"—and his lordship kindly conveyed the purse to his pocket, much to the satisfaction of his companion, who merely retained a couple of hundred francs in his own.

"I have, as you may suppose," observed Mr. Snodgrass, after a moment's pause,—"I have myself cultivated poetry to a considerable extent. I have composed a poem, called the *Pickwickiad*, which I intend to publish one day. Are you a poet, my lord?"

"Mr. Snodgrass, I'm every thing," returned the Count. "When a man has travelled as I have travelled, he is every thing. He is his own barber—his own banker—his own baker. He becomes a politician as well as a poet. Why, what do you think was my scheme, when I proposed to my unfortunate fellow-countrymen, the defeated

Poles, to emigrate to South America? We should have formed a Republic; and as specie would have been somewhat scarce amongst us, I should have adopted a scale like this for the remuneration of the officers of the commonwealth."

Count Boloski drew a paper from his pocket; and, as it was still just light enough for him to read, he edified Mr. Snodgrass with the ensuing rates of salaries:—

"His Excellency the Governor (per annum) 1000 deer-skins;
"His Honour the Chief Justice, 500 ditto;
"The Attorney-General, 450 ditto;
"The Governor's Secretary, 500 racoon skins;
"The State Treasurer, 450 otter skins;
"Each Country Clerk, 300 beaver skins;
"Members of Assembly (per day) 3 racoon skins;
"Justice's fee for signing a warrant, 1 musk-rat skin;
"To the Constable for serving a warrant, 1 mink skin;
"And fees in the same proportion," added Lord Boloski, once more consigning the paper (on which it at first struck Mr. Snodgrass that there was nothing written) to his pocket.

"And why was such an admirable scheme never put into execution, my lord?" demanded Mr. Snodgrass.

"The jealousy of the southern republics of America would have rendered the thing impracticable," explained Count Boloski. "But, by the bye, I have got myself into a little scrape, when I think of it," cried his lordship, after an instant's pause.

"Indeed—I hope not," said Mr. Snodgrass. "You have not forgotten your pistols?"

"Oh! they're as right as a trivet," returned the Polish nobleman. "But the fact is, that I promised to take up a cousin of mine—a devilish handsome girl—who is staying with a French marchioness at Montreuil. She was to be at the hotel where the diligence stops, and was to proceed with me to Paris. How shall we manage? I really quite forgot her."

"This chaise might hold four people," suggested Mr. Snodgrass, timidly.

"So it could," said the Count; "I never thought of that. On the whole we shall be very comfortable together. The Countess Loveminski 's a very fine girl. She is a widow—with a large fortune, and has no one to controul her."

For some reason or another Mr. Snodgrass did not at this moment avow that he was married. His note-book not being in so perfect a state as those of his three great friends, the editor of these *memoranda* cannot elucidate the causes of this extraordinary circumstance. It is therefore fair to suppose that the Count Boloski fancied him to be a single young man.

It was about twelve o'clock at night when the post-chaise stopped at Montreuil; and on enquiry, Count Boloski ascertained that the Countess Loveminski had been waiting for him upwards of three days. Mr. Snodgrass was introduced to her ladyship in due form; and the meeting between her and her cousin was affecting in the extreme. A long embrace and many kisses demonstrated the friendship which can exist in aristocratic as well as in vulgar minds; and

indeed the smack which the Countess Loveminski gave the Count Boloski was so loud, that Mr. Snodgrass felt a tear of tender sympathy trickle poetically down his countenance.

"This is my intimate and most particular friend, Snodgrass," said Count Boloski.

"Me vary happy to make de acquamtance of Monsieur Snowgrass," returned the young lady, with a very bewitching smile, which revealed a set of such pearly teeth, and did such justice to two ruby lips, that the heart of Mr. Snodgrass began to palpitate audibly.

A slight refection was then prepared and partaken of; and at the expiration of half an hour the three travellers were agreeably ensconced in the chaise, the Count and his cousin occupying one seat, and Mr. Snodgrass the other.

"Have you seen the Duke lately?" demanded the Count.

"No—the Marquis called last week," was the reply.

"And the Baron?" said the Count.

"Very well," was the answer.

"The Prince—you know who—hasn't sent to enquire after me again," continued Lord Boloski, "has he?"

"No: but the old dowager Marchioness says she will leave you out of her Will, if you don't call on her," answered the Countess Loveminski; and at this moment it struck Mr. Snodgrass that the young lady, who sate opposite to him, had placed her foot inadvertently upon his own. He accordingly hastened to withdraw his, fearing he might irritate the high-born widow; but, to his great astonishment, her foot followed his; and he soon became aware that the Countess Loveminski must be desperately enamoured of him. The Count grew very sentimental, talked of strangers falling in love with each other the first time they ever met, asked his cousin if she had transferred her certain sixty thousand pounds from the English to the French funds, and then sang the following affecting song, when he had imbibed the contents of a small flask which he carried in his pocket, for the express amusement of his cousin and Mr. Augustus Snodgrass.

SONG.

AIR.—*The Soldier's Tear.*

Upon the drop he turned
To swear a parting oath;
He cursed the parson and Jack Ketch,
And he coolly d——d them both.

He listened to the hum
Of the crowds that gathered nigh;
And he carelessly remarked,
"What a famous man am I!"

Beside the scaffold's fool
His mistress piped her eye
She waved to him her dirty rag,
And whimpering said, "Good bye!"

She mourned the good old times
That ne'er would come again,
When he brought her home a well-lined purse:—
But all her sighs were vain!

Poor Jack was soon turned off,
And gallantly was hung;—
There was a sigh in every breast,
A groan on every tongue.

Go—gaze upon his corse,
And remember then you see
The bravest robber that has been,
Or ever more shall be!

The Count having achieved this exceedingly interesting air, fell back in his seat, and fast asleep at the same time; and the Countess Loveminski, being fain to imitate so excellent an example, commenced a genteel chorus of nasal music which would have afforded an agreeable variation to the performance of the orchestra in an English provincial theatre. Mr. Snodgrass was delighted with the idea of being in the company of such illustrious individuals; and he shortly began to dream of nothing but noble Counts, lovely Countesses, castles on the tops of Polish mountains, and small feet insinuated between his own.

CHAPTER XL.

THE HONESTY OF THE LANDLORD AT THE PRINCIPAL HOTEL IN AMIENS.—A MOST EDIFYING CONVERSATION, IN THE COURSE OF WHICH MR. SNODGRASS RECEIVES CONSIDERABLE INSTRUCTION. —THE EXCHANGE OF TITLES.—LAWSON'S HOTEL.

The Count Boloski having expressed a wish to pass by Amiens, the travellers stopped to breakfast at the Hotel de France in that ancient city. The Countess Loveminski smiled very sweetly upon Mr. Snodgrass as he handed her from the carriage; and when they had each performed the ceremonies of the toilet in separate bedrooms, they met in a parlour, where the Count had already ordered a superb repast.

'Whom have you got there?" demanded the landlord of the postilion in their native French. "He, who gives orders, does not appear to speak our language very fluently."

"They pay deuced well, though," returned the postilion. "'Drive quick,' said the Count, 'and you shall have an *extra* five-franc-piece for yourself.'"

"The devil!" exclaimed the landlord. "Thirty-two posts between Boulogne and Paris, paid at that rate, make a hundred and sixty francs more than the regular charge. What countrymen are they?"

"He who seems to be the commander-in-chief," replied the postilion, "is a Polish Count—and—"

"A Polish Count!" cried the landlord. "Does his name end in '*oski?*'"

"Yes—that I'll be sworn to," answered the postilion, "although he hasn't got it on his portmanteau."

"I have it, then!" cried the landlord; and he hastened to the chamber in which the Count Boloski was shaving himself.

His lordship desired the host to explain his business.

"Your most obedient humble servant," began the obsequious host; "I have something important to communicate to *Monsieur*."

"Make haste, then," was the Count's encouraging remark.

"The truth is," said the landlord, drawing very close to his lordship, and whispering in an almost inaudible tone of voice—"the truth is, I'm the bearer of a very important trust; but I won't betray you."

"That's exceedingly kind," cried Count Boloski, applying the lather-brush to his face, and listening to the landlord whom he strongly suspected to be labouring under some delusion.

"A few days ago," explained the landlord, in the same mysterious tone, "a foreign gentleman came to this house, and lived, while he was here, like a prince. He went away yesterday morning; and when he had paid his bill, he took me on one side, and addressed me as follows:—'Landlord,' said he, 'I must throw myself upon your mercy. The fact is, I am a noble Polish refugee, obliged to leave France for England, without delay. I am, moreover, the bearer of six thousand francs for a friend of mine whom I was to meet at this hotel.'"

"What was that friend's name?" hastily demanded the Count, as he wiped the lather from his face.

"Something ending in '*oski*,'" returned the host.

"And you forget the rest?" continued the Count, leisurely wiping his razor upon a napkin.

"Entirely," answered the landlord.

"Read that," said Count Boloski, handing a card to the host.

"I thought as much," cried the landlord joyfully. "Your friend assured me you would reward me handsomely for my trouble. I swore to acquit myself of the trust confided in me. You see I have not forgotten it."

"Worthy fellow!" cried the Count, considerably affected at this extraordinary display of generosity and integrity: "your reward shall be a hundred francs, besides your bill being paid in the most liberal manner. But which road went my dear friend?"

"By way of Abbeville," was the answer.

"And I come from Boulogne," exclaimed the Count. "How very unfortunate! But, in order to relieve your mind of any doubt as to my identity with the individual to whom the money is to be paid," continued his lordship, quietly seating himself upon his trunk and staring steadfastly upon the landlord, "I will give you a distinct and correct description of my much esteemed friend. He is a man—"

"Of about forty," interrupted the host.

"Yes—of about forty," said Count Boloski. "His hair—"

"Nearly as black as mine," added the host.

"Precisely," cried the Count. "And his nose "

"My wife said aquiline," elucidated the landlord.

"Right—quite right," assented the Count. "His height—"

"A little taller than you," observed the host.

"Well, he may be," returned the Count. "In person—"

"Somewhat stout," added the anxious Boniface.

"There, haven't I hit it?" demanded the Count in triumph; and the landlord, who felt himself convinced beyond all doubt of his guest's identity with the rightful claimant of the money, in consequence of the lucid and satisfactory description of the friend just given, hastened to his own private room, and speedily returned with six thousand francs, which he placed in the hands of Count Boloski!

"Boloski Boloski!" murmured the landlord to himself, as he tendered the coin. "Well—I was certain the name ended in '*oski.*'"

"It is the only name in Poland that has so peculiar a termination," carelessly observed the Count, as he placed the money in his writing-desk, after having bestowed the promised remuneration upon the landlord. "The founder of our family was the great Gulligowiski, and from that root have sprung numerous branches, of which the Boloskis, the Loveminskis, the Cramitorlinovitchkis, and the Creduloskis are the principal. In fact, they say that it was one of our ancestors who handed Noah out of the ark."

The landlord did not perceive that the Count had evidently been misinformed in reference to this fact; he therefore left his illustrious guest to perform his ablutions, and retired to superintend the repast which had been ordered.

Count Boloski was in a most unexceptionably good humour when he made his appearance in the breakfast-room; and so soon as a little whispering and a good deal of laughing had taken place between him and the Countess Loveminski, he condescended to devote a small portion of his attention to Mr. Snodgrass.

"Excellent room this, Snodgrass," observed the Count with an amiable degree of familiarity.

Mr. Snodgrass respectfully assented to his lordship's remark, with the additional venture of an opinion that the postilion's boots and hat were really classical and poetical, in every sense of the expressive words.

"Quite antique, are they not?" said Count Boloski: "but nothing to the boots and hats in Poland. Why—on emergencies they make portmanteaus of the former, and punch-bowls of the latter."

"How very extraordinary!" cried Mr. Snodgrass. "I really should not have thought it."

The Count declared that he should have wondered if he had, and was about to narrate another anecdote connected with his native land, when the breakfast made its appearance.

The beauteous Loveminski seated herself exceedingly close to Mr. Snodgrass, chattered to him a great deal during the repast, and terminated the conversation by assuring him "that she did so love de Inglis gentelmans, dey were so vary insiniwating and gallant." All this was very flattering and pleasant; and that, together with plenty of wine and liqueur (at the second glass of which latter the Countess accidentally placed her foot upon Mr. Snodgrass's toes and neglected to withdraw it in the excitement of the conviviality), served to render the meal exceedingly social and agreeable. When it was brought to a conclusion, the Countess hastened to her room to tie on her bonnet, the Count proceeded to the yard to see that the luggage was properly stowed away, and Mr. Snodgrass, having nothing else to do, paid the bill.

Another quarter of an hour elapsed, during which the trunks were corded behind the vehicle and the horses before; and then the equipage proceeded on its way, accompanied by a cloud of dust and the best wishes of the landlord and his dependants.

"How very civil and attentive every one appears to be," observed Mr. Snodgrass, as the chaise rattled rapidly along the paved road.

"A title, my dear Snodgrass, does every thing," exclaimed the Count, tapping the writing-case which he carried upon his knees.

"Oh! de title vary good ting," assented the fascinating Loveminski.

"I really do begin to think that it must be rather agreeable", said Mr. Snodgrass, slightly envying the aristocratic appendages to the names of his fellow-travellers. "One certainly experiences more civility at the hotels where one stops."

"No doubt about that," said the Count. "But I am sure I care little for my rank and title," he added, stretching himself lazily back in the vehicle, and yawning desperately as if with *ennui*.

"An' me sure me not care more dan de wal-u of dis button for my title," cried the Countess, a smile of contempt for all worldly vanities curling her pouting lips.

"How beautiful are condescension and humility in aristocracy and wealth!" ejaculated Mr. Snodgrass, almost involuntarily. "The lowliness and meekness of the high-born and the noble are as—as—"

"Wonderful as they are rare," said the Count, perceiving that his friend was somewhat at a loss how to round his period.

"Exactly what I should have myself observed, my lord," returned Mr. Snodgrass.

"Well, Snodgrass,—I tell you what it is," cried the Count, starting as if a very sudden idea had struck him; "let us have a bit of fun. I am tired of always being a lord—and you are anxious to try it. Now—I'll tell you what we'll do. During the remainder of the journey you shall be the Count, and I will be Mr. Snodgrass. What say you?"

Mr. Snodgrass had a great deal to say against the propriety of this arrangement; but all his objections were over-ruled by the Count, who laughed heartily at the joke, and declared, in a peculiar style of aristocratic eloquence, that it was "the rummest go *he'd* ever known in the whole course of *his* life." And so it was, indeed; but Mr. Snodgrass was compelled to submit, because the Countess Loveminski besought him to lend himself to so excellent a piece of fun. The matter was accordingly arranged to the satisfaction of the Count and his fair cousin; and a great deal more laughing, and joking, and quizzing succeeded, to make the means of amusement complete.

Now, be it observed, that Mr. Snodgrass was not more vain than his fellow-creatures; but he felt his importance in the world of letters as a poet, and in that of utility as a traveller: and he knew that if he were not a nobleman in reality, he fully deserved the title at the hands of his countrymen. Perhaps he was persuaded that himself and his three illustrious friends whom he was hastening to join in Paris, would certainly attain that eminence shortly: but, be this as it may—he adopted the Count's title with an ease which set it off to advantage, and was pronounced by both that individual and his beauteous cousin to

have every appearance of a legitimate noble. The Count, however, ventured to suggest an increase of swagger, and a little drawling in the voice, on their arrival at inns; and these hints having been duly attended to, Mr. Snodgrass's style of personating his superiors was pronounced to be inimitable.

"How vary well you do it, milord Snowgrass," observed the Countess Loveminski, just after they had changed horses at a small village: "ven de Count call you *Count* before dem people at de inn, you look so noble, and dey all bow wid respect."

"Your favourable opinion is exceedingly flattering," said Mr. Snodgrass, with a low salaam, at which the Count Boloski nodded approvingly, and tendered his friend a pinch of snuff from the box of his illustrious relative. "It seems very easy to be a lord," added Mr. Snodgrass.

"O yes," exclaimed Count Boloski; then, with great frankness, he began to detail the modern qualifications of aristocracy. "You must take care," said he, and keep pace with the other lords of the day; and in order to do so, you must be exceedingly skilful in wrenching off knockers, thrashing police-officers, fighting hackney-coachmen, and getting bills discounted. If you can seduce a man's wife, you will be esteemed the very essence of gallantry—that is, an individual a little too fond of intrigue; and the ladies will say behind your back, 'Oh! the naughty man: he's a charming creature, however!' You need not be afraid of committing any disturbance in the street at night, because the police magistrates never punish you, if you be a lord, beyond a paltry fine of five shillings: they would not dare think of sending you to the tread-mill, such is the happy state of the aristocracy in England. You must moreover be deeply in debt, and have all the sheriff's-officers in your pay—bespeak the benefits of the fashionable actresses—drive a coach every now and then on the Bath or Brighton Road—attend the gambling-houses—get up prize-fights—nod to all the jockeys and black-legs upon town—and pass six weeks every now and then in the King's Bench."

"God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass, who had listened to this tirade in hitherto silent astonishment; "is that all that's necessary to make a nobleman?"

"That—and knowing how to tie a cravat, talk nonsense, play at billiards, and despise every thing connected with the poor," added Count Boloski.

"And yet," pursued Mr. Snodgrass, "if a person in the middle walks of life were to be guilty of such performances, he would be for ever disgraced and shunned."

"That's the very thing," returned Count Boloski; "for if the aristocracy hadn't the little privileges I mentioned, what's the use of their titles?"

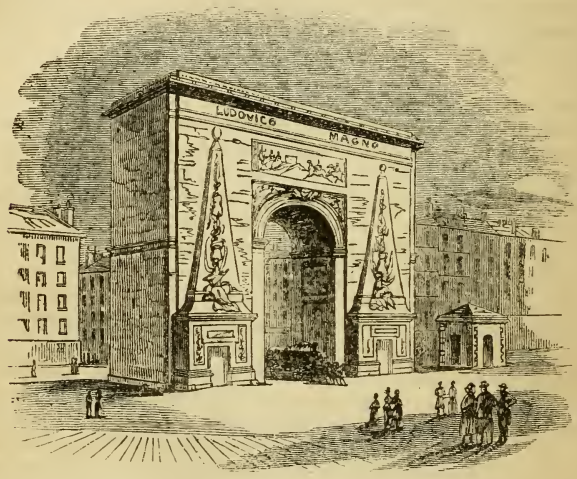
"Vot indeed?" repeated the beauteous Loveminski. "De poor mans is but de shuttle-cock which de aristocrat strike wid his bat at his pleasure."

"Sweet illustration!" exclaimed the enraptured Mr. Snodgrass, as he exchanged a tender glance with the Countess, which her cousin of course would not perceive.

"That very aristocracy is the glory of the English nation," observed

Count Boloski, after a momentary pause: "and I should like to know what would become of the splendour of the throne without such lovely ornaments?"

In such conversation as this the time was passed agreeably away and every moment served to convince Mr. Snodgrass that he might consider himself exceedingly happy in having formed the acquaintance of his fellow-travellers. A slight repast at Clermont put them all in a better humour still; and at a late hour in the evening they entered Paris by the faubourg Saint Denis, the splendid gate of which attracted Mr. Snodgrass's most particular attention.



"You had better sleep at the hotel to which we are going, to-night," suggested the Count; "and to-morrow morning you can join your friends."

Mr. Snodgrass reflected that it was just probable that there might be no spare-bed for him at Mr. Pickwick's lodgings; and he therefore accepted this proposition.

"Which hotel are we to put up at—Meurice's?" enquired Mr. Snodgrass.

"No—hang Meurice's," cried the Count Boloski, who had evidently some deeply-rooted aversion to that splendid caravanserail. "Lawson's Bedford Hotel—to be sure; Rue Saint Honoré 323. I have already ordered the postilion to drive there."

In due time the carriage entered the yard of Mr. Lawson's extensive establishment; and the landlord himself, together with his wife, Mr. Lane (the commissioner), and a dozen waiters, chambermaids, "boots," porters, &c., rushed out to welcome the travellers.

"Now then, Count Boloski—now then," cried the real nobleman, at the top of his voice, to Mr. Snodgrass; "take care of the steps, my lord—there—now you have it—that's right, my lord;" and in a low whisper, as Mr. Snodgrass descended from the chaise, he added—"Keep up your title for the fun of the thing."

Mr. Lawson, Mrs. Lawson, Mr. Lane, the waiters, the chambermaids, "the boots," the porters, and the *et cetera*, all made a low bow to Mr. Snodgrass, when they heard him saluted by the title of Count; and that gentleman was too much pleased with the civility he experienced at the moment, to convince any one present of the mistake under which they all laboured as to his rank.

When the postilion had been settled with, the three travellers were shown up a magnificent staircase into a *suite* of apartments on the first floor, that looked into a little garden on one side of which were the Rivoli Baths; and all the saucepans in the kitchen were put into immediate requisition to provide a supper worthy of the Count Boloski and his friends. This circumstance threw every thing into additional activity and bustle throughout the hotel, especially as Lady Snib, who occupied the ground floor, was giving one of those grand dinners, for which she, however, eventually forgot to pay.

"Who are the fashionable people now in Paris, waiter?" demanded Count Boloski, of the attendant that ministered when supper was served up.

"I can't exactly say, myself, Sir," returned the man, who was an Englishman; "but there is at this moment a party of the clerks from Bennis's Library in the Rue Neuve Saint Augustin, dining in a private room close by, to celebrate the birth-day of one of them; and if you please, Sir, I will request the principal man about the establishment to step in. He is the clerk of the Circulating-Library Department, and can give you every information."

This offer was immediately agreed to; and in a few minutes (the waiter having disappeared during that time) a short, stout, grinning, good-natured-looking man was ushered into the room.

"Mr. Matthew Tunks, Sir," said the waiter; whereupon the individual whose appellations were thus proclaimed, bowed very obsequiously, and grinned more than ever.

"Well, Mr. Tunks," cried the Count, "who have you got in Paris now? Any one worth knowing, eh?"

"I will show you in a moment, Sir," said Mr. Matthew Tunks; and after fumbling in his pocket, he drew forth a small newspaper, which he handed to the Count. "This is the *Paris Advertiser*, Sir," continued Mr. Tunks, pointing to the title of the journal; "and there is the list of 'Fashionable Arrivals,' Sir," he added, indicating one of the columns.

"Why, I know that two or three slap-up people, whose names are not down here, arrived last week from Boulogne," exclaimed the Count. "What's the reason of such an omission?"

"Oh! Sir," elucidated Mr. Matthew Tunks, with a grin more extensive than its predecessors, "they subscribe to *Galignani*. We only mention the names of *our* subscribers."

"And which is the best establishment?" enquired the Count.

"Our's, decidedly," replied Mr. Tunks, handing cards round the table. "We have forty thousand volumes in the Circulating-Library alone, and we take four hundred newspapers every day. Subscribers are moreover respectfully informed that the sooner books are returned when read, the greater accommodation it will be to themselves in ob-

taining quickly the works they require. To prevent disappointment they will please to send a list—"

"Why, you are quoting from your own prospectus," said Mr. Snodgrass, carelessly referring to the card which had been presented to him.

"Well, I really think I am," exclaimed Mr. Matthew Tunks, with a grin that beat all the others. "And now, gentlemen—beg pardon, my lady—if you will allow me to send for your subscriptions to-morrow morning, I shall be obliged. Good evening, gentlemen;" and Mr. Matthew Tunks retired with many very low bows.

"What sort of a fellow is that?" demanded the Count of the waiter, when the door had closed behind Mr. Matthew Tunks.

"Why, Sir," answered the waiter, "he is considered to be the greatest liar in Paris; and the Frenchman, who is the sleeping proprietor of the establishment to which he belongs, is the most notorious villain in existence. His name is Jules Rénard—he lives in the Rue de Tournon—and the way in which he treated a young English gentleman in respect to that library, was shameful in the extreme."

Neither the Countess Loveminski, Count Boloski, nor Mr. Snodgrass felt at all inclined to linger over the supper-table. They accordingly abridged the loquacity of the waiter as much as possible, and desired to be shown to their respective chambers—a request that was immediately complied with on the part of a most insolent chambermaid, who, old as she was ugly, took the liberty of chattering to them in the most familiar manner as she conducted them to their apartments in that wing which faces the coffee-room and the little garden before alluded to.

CHAPTER XLI.

MR. SNODGRASS RECEIVES A LITTLE COMFORTABLE AND REFRESHING INFORMATION RELATIVE TO CERTAIN MATTERS IN WHICH HE WAS MORE OR LESS INTERESTED, AND WHICH THE INTEGRITY OF HIS FELLOW-TRAVELLERS WAS INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH.—THE GENDARME.

How delicious is the downy couch, to use the high-flown phraseology of the fraternity of poets, after five-and-twenty hours of weary travelling! A bed is the most indispensable of mundane comforts. It is the place in which we are born and pass the happiest portion of our lives, and yet which we never wish to keep. But at one time it appears much more luxurious than another; at least, such was the opinion of Mr. Augustus Snodgrass—and he was no mean authority—on the occasion of his retiring to one for the first time at Lawson's Bedford Hotel.

Mr. Snodgrass did not, however, remain awake long to indulge in his reflections. He satisfied himself with the conclusion at which he had so sagaciously arrived relative to the comforts of his couch, and resigned the custody of his person into the care of the Genius of Sleep. In other words, he began to snore most manfully, and would doubtless

have continued the same interesting occupation until nine on the following morning, had not a disagreeable noise awoke him just as the clock of the Louvre proclaimed the hour of two. Mr. Snodgrass started, rubbed his eyes, and then portruded his head, which was adorned with a night-cap, through the opening in the curtains of his bed; but he as speedily withdrew it, for, by the sickly light of an expiring candle which he had forgotten to extinguish, he became aware that some one was in his chamber; and his extensive imagination, aided by all his native romance of poetry, immediately transformed the intruder into "a midnight robber or lurking assassin" who had come to plunder, if not to murder him at two o'clock in the morning. In a moment he was, however, agreeably undeceived.

"Snodgrass, my dear fellow," whispered a voice which the gentleman thus amiably adjured forthwith recognised to be that of Count Boloski, "are you awake?"

"Quite," replied Mr. Snodgrass. "But, for God's sake, what is the matter?"

"You must know that I am a great revolutionist—a terrible republican—a political offender," returned the Count, speaking very quickly; "and that my arrival in Paris is known. The Gendarmes—"

"The Gendarmes!" interrupted Mr. Snodgrass in the greatest alarm.

"The Gendarmes have got scent of me, and are already in the court-yard," continued the Count. "Now—will you stick by a friend? can I rely on you?"

"Certainly—oh! certainly," almost screamed Mr. Snodgrass, with so piteous a face beneath his white cotton night-cap that the Count, even in the midst of his difficulties, could not forbear from laughing.

"Then keep them at bay—do not deny that you are the Count till I have had time to escape," said the noble and persecuted Pole: "Loveminski is safe. She cannot be implicated in the matter:—and what is more, I don't care a curse if she is," added this generous martyr in the cause of freedom.

Mr. Snodgrass murmured an assent to his friend's request; and the Count, who was dressed in his travelling garb, as if he had never divested himself of it, opened the window of Mr. Snodgrass's bed-room and leapt lightly out upon the ledge on which it looked; for, on account of the other chambers in that department of the building being unusually full, our three travellers had been lodged on the top floor. Mr. Snodgrass was quite bewildered by all that had occurred within the last few moments; and fancying that his safety also depended upon flight, he jumped from his bed, and followed the Count through the window upon the ledge, which was happily guarded by a parapet about three feet and a half high.

"Go back, you fool—go back," vehemently exclaimed the Count, as the noise of Mr. Snodgrass's descent upon the ledge fell on his ear.

"But, my dear Count," cried Mr. Snodgrass, remonstrating in a plaintive tone against the unceremonious injunction of his friend, while his shirt fluttered to the breeze of the chill morning.

His voice was lost in the air—the Count had turned the angle of the building—and not even his footsteps were any longer audible. Mr. Snodgrass struck his forehead in despair; but as that did not

relieve him from his embarrassment, he thought it more prudent to return to his bed, and await the result of the visit of the police.

He was about to adopt this rational method of proceeding, when a loud knock at the door of his chamber, and the clattering of swords and the stamp of heavy boots in the passage beyond it, plunged him into such a state of alarm and trepidation, that, if there had been no parapet, he would have fallen from the ledge into the garden. The knocks were repeated; but Mr. Snodgrass's tongue refused to utter the necessary words to bid the Gendarmes enter; so they adopted a more speedy though less ceremonious way of obtaining ingress to the apartment than waiting for its inmate to unlock the door, which they smashed into two or three pieces with one kick of a jack-boot.

"Where is this Count Boloski?" demanded the leader of the Gendarmes of Mr. Lawson, who accompanied them with a candle.

A low moan from the vicinity of the window, and the circumstance of that article of convenience being open, attracted the officer of the police to the spot; and his visual rays encountered the shivering form of the miserable Mr. Snodgrass.

"The tall one is the Count, is he not?" enquired the officer.

Mr. Lawson replied in the affirmative.

"Then here he is to a certainty," observed the Gendarme; and he put his foot upon a chair, to leap through the window and secure his prey.

The appearance of the formidable cocked-hat at the open window, surmounting a face in which whiskers and moustachios were amongst the most prominent features, gave a sudden impulse and energy to the paralyzed limbs of Mr. Snodgrass. Reflection was out of the question; but in obedience to the sudden dictation of his own alarms, he started and rushed along the ledge, in the direction already pursued by the Count, with the speed of lightning. The Gendarme uttered a terrible oath in French, and sprang from the window after him. Mr. Snodgrass had already gained the angle before alluded to, and was preparing to turn round it, when an immense cat, whom the extraordinary apparition of a gentleman in his shirt had doubtless terrified, made so desperate an attack upon him, that, in the confusion and fresh terrors awakened by this unexpected onslaught, he turned round to retrace his steps, and fell against the Gendarme, into his power, and then backwards upon the cold leads simultaneously.

"Oh! let me die—let me die!" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass, whose mind had been worked up to a pitch of almost poetic frenzy by the occurrences of the night: "let me die—I am a wretch not fit to live!"

"The devil! he speaks English very well, though—this Polish Count," exclaimed the Gendarme, as he proceeded to pick Mr. Snodgrass up and conduct him back to his chamber.

"Use no violence—I will follow you," said Mr. Snodgrass, somewhat recovering his presence of mind and a little of his lost composure.

"Now dress yourself, and prepare to follow us to the guard-house," cried the officer of Gendarmes, when he and his prisoner had once more passed through the window.

"He's no more a Polish Count than I am," exclaimed Mr. Lawson, placing the candle upon the drawers. "He speaks English as well as I do."

"I am not a Count—I am an Englishman," observed Mr. Snodgrass sullenly, as he proceeded to put himself into his clothes.

"I thought it was all a sham," said the Gendarme.

"The Count himself has—" began Mr. Snodgrass.

"What? which Count? who?" demanded the officer.

"Why, since the truth must be told," continued Mr. Snodgrass, fancying that his friend had now had sufficient time to make his escape, "I only adopted the Count's title for the fun of the thing. He has sought safety in flight—and my name is Snodgrass, as you may convince yourselves by looking on the lid of that trunk, or into my pocket-book, or even on my passport."

"Snodgrass is the name of the other swindler," cried Mr. Lawson.

"Snodgrass is my name," indignantly exclaimed the sole proprietor of that far-famed patronymic; "and my friends can prove it."

"You haven't any friends," persisted Mr. Lawson, using a term of reproach much in vogue amongst cads and gentlemen in the same distinguished walk of London society.

"My friends are well known in this city, Sir," retorted Mr. Snodgrass; and he proceeded to extol the excellencies of his three former associates in travel.

"Pickwick—Tupman—Winkle!" exclaimed the officer: "there must be some mistake here. You may retire;"—and the two Gendarmes who had accompanied their superior, and to whom this hint was addressed, withdrew accordingly.

"What's the matter, now?" demanded Mr. Lawson.

"You are the friend of the gentlemen you mentioned?" enquired the officer of Mr. Snodgrass, without heeding the interrogation of the landlord.

Mr. Snodgrass, of course, replied in the affirmative.

"And how came you to travel with the Count, as you call him?" continued the Gendarme.

Mr. Snodgrass succinctly stated how he had fallen in with Count Boloski, at Boulogne; and then detailed those particulars with which the reader is already acquainted.

"You have been the victim of the most consummate swindler under heaven," cried the Gendarme, when Mr. Snodgrass had brought his narrative to a conclusion; "and if I do not labour under a very great mistake, he has already taken in your friends more than once. But let us see."

The Gendarme desired Mr. Lawson to conduct them to the chamber which had been occupied by the *soi-disant* Count Boloski; and when they were shown thither, he commenced a most unceremonious investigation into the carpet-bag which the fugitive had left behind him. Two or three letters speedily revealed the truth; they had been addressed and delivered in London, through the medium of the two-penny post; and their superscriptions were various; inasmuch as some were addressed to "Mr. William Sugden, *Lanthorn and Cat*, Blackman Street, Borough,"—and others to "Adolphus Crashem, Esq., No. ——, Maddox Street, Regent Street."

"This is as I thought," said the Gendarme, as he handed the letters to Mr. Snodgrass.

"I know this swindler, by repute, well!" exclaimed the Pick-

wickian, in the deepest indignation and astonishment. "But by how singular a combination of circumstances have I become the victim of him who has so successfully duped my friends! Why—it was but a short time ago that the villain passed through the Insolvents' Court in London."

"And the lady?" suggested Mr. Lawson.

"We have been uncivil enough to neglect her ladyship," said the Gendarme, with a smile. "Perhaps I may know her also."

Mr. Lawson led the way to the chamber which had been allotted to the fair Loveminski; but its supposed occupant was not there.

"And there was a quantity of plate locked up in the cupboard!" exclaimed Mr. Lawson, a sudden paleness overspreading his countenance: then, having handed the candle to the Gendarme, he rushed to the corner in which the little articles hinted at had been concealed. "God bless me! she's decamped with my best dinner service!" he added after a moment's investigation: "not a spoon—not a fork—not a thing left behind!"

"But here also is a trace of her," said the Gendarme; and he took from the fugitive lady's trunk a pair of gloves, in the inside of which the magic words "Anastasie de Volage" had been written with blue ink.

"And my money?" ejaculated Mr. Snodgrass, as he suddenly recollected the purse he had consigned to the Count near Samer.

"Not one stiver will you ever recover of that," answered the Gendarme.

"And my plate?" cried Mr. Lawson.

"In a condition equally hopeless," was the consolatory reply. "But I must at once put my men upon the alert after the fugitives; and then we will talk over the matter," continued the Gendarme; "for, I suppose," he added with a smile, "you have neither of you any inclination to sleep."

Both Mr. Lawson and Mr. Snodgrass declared that they had not; and while the Gendarme hastened to send his followers in pursuit of the Count and the Countess, *alias* Mr. Sugden and Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, the landlord and his guest proceeded to the private sitting of the former, near the office, in which there was a cheerful fire, by the aid of which and a little hot brandy-and-water, they managed to instil a trifle of comfort into their souls and bodies at the same time.

"Altogether this is one of the most extraordinary adventures I ever met with," observed the Gendarme, when he had returned from the performance of his duty, and was seated in the private parlour aforesaid.

"It is very remarkable," assented Mr. Snodgrass.

"But there is one coincidence with which you are not yet acquainted," continued the Gendarme. "Have your friends ever spoken to you in their letters of one Dumont?"

"Yes—often," exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass, a light breaking in upon him.

"That's my name," added the Gendarme; "Alfred Dumont, at your service. Why—I know Mr. Pickwick and his companions well; or else do you think I should be sitting so quietly over this fire and

that brandy with you now? If I were not convinced that you were a gentleman who had been most vilely duped, I should have arrested you as a conspirator in the fraud which was practised upon the landlord at Amiens, and which was discovered a few hours after your departure from that city; for the real Count Smoloski, for whom the money was destined, arrived there and was arrested by the police. The whole affair was then explained."

"And wherefore was the Count arrested?" demanded Mr. Snodgrass, when he had expressed his delight at meeting with M. Dumont.

"Merely to be re-conducted to Calais and sent back to England," was the answer. "He is a Polish refugee, and therefore cannot be allowed to remain in France, so long as his mind is perpetually bent upon revolutions and conspiracies. But, to return to what I was saying just now,—is not the whole adventure a combination of the most singular coincidences?"

"Very," rejoined Mr. Snodgrass: "but I am sorry for Mr. Lawson's loss."

"On second thoughts I'm glad of it," said that gentleman. "The account of the whole affair will get into the London as well as the Paris papers, and will be the best advertisement I could have for my hotel."

"Indeed! Well—I should never have thought of that," exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass.

"Oh! yes," returned Mr. Lawson, helping himself to some more brandy-and-water. "Why, when I first came into this place, the custom was so slack and the business so dull, that I actually thought of setting fire to one of the wings of the hotel to create notoriety."

"That would have been very expensive, would it not?" said Mr. Snodgrass, a little astonished at what he heard.

"It would rather," answered Mr. Lawson; "so what do you think I did?"

"I really can't guess," observed Mr. Snodgrass. "Set *yourself* on fire, perhaps; or, may be, your head waiter?"

"Oh! no—not quite so green as that," returned Mr. Lawson. "But I hired an English gentleman, who was reported to have lost a large sum of money at Frescati's, to attempt suicide in the principal suite of apartments. A subscription was raised for him, and all his acquaintances went to condole with him. For a whole fortnight he ate three breakfasts and five dinners every day."

"How was that?" demanded Mr. Snodgrass in increased astonishment.

"Why, every time any illustrious person, such as the Bishop, or an *attaché* to the Embassy, called upon him," explained Mr. Lawson, "up went the best breakfast or dinner that could be provided, according to the time of the day; and as his visitors were sure to question him about the charges, he always replied 'that they were so moderate it was a wonder how Lawson could do it for the money.' I attribute nearly all my business to that happy idea of the attempt at suicide."

"Most extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass. "But is this sort of thing usual in France amongst the hotel-keepers?"

"And in England as well," returned Mr. Lawson, "I should hope."

A desultory conversation in this style wiled away the time till eight

o'clock or so, and then the Gendarme proffered his assistance in showing Mr. Snodgrass the way to the lodgings occupied by that gentleman's friends in the Rue Royale. To this Mr. Snodgrass assented with many thanks; and having directed Mr. Lawson to forward his baggage and account to Mr. Pickwick's lodgings in the course of the morning, he accompanied M. Dumont to the place of his destination. Dumont purposely led Mr. Snodgrass through the back entrance to Lawson's hotel, and conducted him up the Rue de Rivoli, with the view of enabling him to form a favourable impression of Paris at the first glance. The young Englishman was astonished at the splendour of the street, and stood for a considerable time to admire the mighty

piles of the palace of the Tuileries with its beautiful gardens on one side, and the uniform range of lofty houses upon the other. It was with something bordering upon reluctance that he pursued his way towards the Rue Royale, where he arrived in about a quarter of an hour, and where he and the friendly Gendarme were cordially welcomed by Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle.

CHAPTER XLII.

MR. KALLAWAY, BEING IN A SITUATION IN WHICH MANY FASHIONABLE YOUNG ENGLISH GENTLEMEN FIND THEMSELVES EVERY EVENING, SEEKS A BED AT A HOTEL.—MR. KALLAWAY HAS MANY VERY CURIOUS DREAMS, WHICH LEAD TO AS MANY EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS.

Mr. Kallaway, on the evening preceding the morning on which the adventures detailed in the last chapter, took place, had dined with his friend, Mr. Scuttle, and had passed an extra hour or so over the bottle with that gentleman. When he rose to depart at about one o'clock, he fancied that he had acted very prudently in having kept himself so sober; but when he got out into the open air, he perceived that the Boulevards were scarcely wide enough for him, and instead

of one moon he saw two. Alarmed at these phenomena, Mr. Kallaway thought it would be better to sleep at some hotel than attempt to return home at that late hour; for he had a faint recollection of having read in *Galignani's Messenger*, a few days before, that a hackney-coachman had murdered a gentleman in the outskirts of Paris, or that a gentleman had murdered a hackney-coachman, he did not exactly know which; but he persuaded himself that it would be more prudent to sleep at Lawson's, where he was known, than trust himself in a vehicle where he was a perfect stranger. So he arrived at the gate of Lawson's hotel at about half-past one in the morning, fully convinced in his own mind that there were two moons, two columns in the Place Vendôme, and two porters who opened the hotel-door for him.

Be all this as it may—Mr. Kallaway demanded if he could have a bed; and as his request was accompanied by a five-franc piece, which he had a sufficiency of caution left about him to slip into the porter's hand, an answer in the affirmative was returned.

"There is exactly one," said the porter; "and only one. And I am still afraid it will not suit you, for it is on the fifth floor, and looks upon the leads at the back of the building."

Mr. Kallaway just understood that he could have a bed; and that was all he required. So he bounced through the wicket, nearly knocked the porter down, and fell against the door of that functionary's lodge in his endeavours to hold himself up.

"How very slippery the yard is," observed Mr. Kallaway to the porter.

The porter assented to the truth of this remark with the uncontradictory politeness of a Frenchman; and having lit a candle in his lodge, and taken a key from a nail in the wall, he desired his wife to take care of the baby and the gate, as if the latter article were a lovely infant as dear to him as the former, and led the way towards the bed-room destined for Mr. Kallaway. They crossed the yard, and ascended the flight of stairs on the right hand side corner at the bottom; and when they arrived at the fifth storey, the porter put the key into the lock of a door, handed Mr. Kallaway the candle, and retired to relieve his spouse of one of the two charges he had entrusted to her.

Mr. Kallaway unlocked the door, and walked into the bed-room as well as he could, wondering why the door-way was so small, and uttering certain imprecations against his eyes, and then the candle, and then the very limbs which aided him to enter his couch. He did not, however, think of including the window, which was wide open, in the catalogue of subjects chosen for his invectives; nor did he take the trouble to close it.

Mr. Kallaway fell into bed and asleep at the same moment; and most varied and chequered were the dreams which broke upon his rest. At one moment he was employed in hunting a black-and-white sow out of his celery-beds; at another he was contemplating a litter of half-a-dozen pigs with the most unfeigned satisfaction; and then he fancied that he saw the two moons, and the two columns, and the two porters all over again. Whether he were only dozing after this series of singular visions, or whether he were again dreaming, we

must leave the reader to decide. But, when he had dismissed the moons, and the columns, and the porters from his imagination, he saw—or imagined he saw—a figure present itself at the open window, which looked upon the leads, and first cautiously poke its head into the room. The figure gazed wistfully into the chamber, and then gradually inserted itself through the casement till it stood in the middle of the room. Now it struck Mr. Kallaway that the figure presently bent over towards his bed and gazed upon his countenance; and that as the figure drew near to him, he shut his eyes in affright; whereupon it was very probable that the said figure might have imagined him to be asleep.

When all this was done, the figure closed the window, and looked several times thoughtfully round the room. The next impression upon Mr. Kallaway's mind was that he, having once more opened his eyes very slightly, saw this strange vision suddenly disencumber itself of its own clothes, and rapidly attire its limbs and carcase in his, Mr. Kallaway's, raiment. All this took place by the light of the dawn; and much more too: for it appears that the figure made a bundle of his own clothes, after having put on Mr. Kallaway's; and then perceiving Mr. Kallaway's cloak for the first time, he thought it expedient to assume that also, particularly as it would conceal the bundle just alluded to from the eye of the curious. The figure then stole out of the room, by the door, wrapt up in mystery and the large cloak.

But all this was regarded at the time by Mr. Kallaway as a dream; and he attached, when he awoke at about eight o'clock, as much importance to the visit of the strange figure as he did to the idea of his having chased a black-and-white sow out of the celery-beds.

"Strange things dreams are!" said Mr. Kallaway to himself, as he rubbed his eyes, and sate up in his bed. "Gad—I could have sworn that I saw a fellow come in at my window!"

And Mr. Kallaway laughed heartily when he thought of the strange adventure he persuaded himself he had dreamt of a few hours before. So soon as he had given vent to his mirth to the utmost of his wishes, he again lay down, pulled the bell-rope which hung at the head of his bed, and once more indulged in another long and boisterous shout of hilarity.

In the course of a minute the "boots" obeyed Mr. Kallaway's summons.

"Take my clothes to brush," said Mr. Kallaway, with difficulty suppressing a third burst of merriment.

"Your boots, *Monsieur?*" demanded the man, taking those receptacles for the feet from the floor.

"Yes—and my clothes, too," said Mr. Kallaway. "By G—d, it's excellent!"

So indeed it was, for the domestic could not find his clothes anywhere; and after a most rigorous search under the bed, and in the drawers, he intimated as much to Mr. Kallaway.

"There—on that chair," exclaimed Mr. Kallaway, impatiently pointing with his right hand in a certain direction, but without turning his head. "Have you found them?"

The servant replied in the negative.

"This is very singular," said Mr. Kallaway; "but perhaps the porter took them down with him when I came in," suggested the ex-farmer, whose memory did not retain a very strong impression of what had passed on his arrival in the middle of the night.

The "boots" hastened to the porter's lodge, and in five minutes returned accompanied by that guardian genius himself.

"For heaven's sake, what is the matter?" demanded Mr. Kallaway, again starting up in his bed; for he was quite alarmed at the horror-struck countenances of the two servants.

"What, are *you* here, *Monsieur?*" demanded the porter, with astonishment.

"Here!" ejaculated Mr. Kallaway. "Why, did you not let me in last night, yourself?"

"Certainly," replied the porter: "and did you not leave the hotel this morning at about three o'clock?"

"I—no!" said Mr. Kallaway, looking at himself, to assure himself that he himself, and no one but himself, was in that bed.

"Then it was a ghost!" cried the porter; "for he had your cloak on—I could swear to it, as I looked through the small window before I pulled the cord to open the door."

Mr. Kallaway now recollected his dream, and began to suspect that it was a little more connected with some horrid reality, than he had at first imagined. He immediately communicated his suspicions to the porter and the "boots."

"There were some Gendarmes who arrived in the night—that is at about two, or a little before," said the porter; "and the person whom they came after, made his escape by the windows, as I heard Mr. Lawson say just now."

"Then the whole thing is explained!" cried Mr. Kallaway, sitting bolt upright in his bed; "and I must go home in my shirt!"

The porter and "boots" burst out into a violent fit of laughter, and rushed out of the room to hasten and inform their fellow-servants of Mr. Kallaway's dilemma; while that gentleman, indignant at being thus deserted in the midst of his troubles, gave one peel at the bell to call them back, and snapped the wire of communication in halves with the force, the rope remaining in his hands.

Capers are generally considered to be a remedy for boiled mutton and low-spirits; but most extraordinary were the capers which Mr. Kallaway cut in his room, when he had destroyed the only means of summoning any one to his assistance. He jumped out of bed, and danced about the chamber like a madman; and then he opened the window, and shouted "*Garçon!*" at the top of a very irritated voice and then he resumed his antics; and lastly, he threw himself exhausted upon the bed. The part of the hotel in which he was lodged was too distant from the main court-yard, into which it did not look, to enable him to make any one hear his cries: and the porter and "boots" quite forgot that he might require their assistance: for the whole hotel was agog at the adventures which had occurred during the night.

Mr. Kallaway was driven to the very verge of desperation; for the adjacent clock of the Louvre informed him in a very short time that it was ten, and he had several appointments of consequence to keep

What was to be done? The case was urgent; and it struck Mr. Kallaway that if he could only make his appearance at the bottom of the stairs which communicated with the principal court-yard, he might still be enabled to obtain some answer.

He accordingly put on his boots and hat, which the despoiler had left behind; and then looked round the room for something to attire his body withal. But nothing met his eye save the blankets. Not a moment was to be lost—all reflection was useless; and in another instant Mr. Kallaway had wrapped one of the blankets around his person, which, with the hat upon his head, and the boots appearing beneath the garment, had a most airy and singular appearance.

"Now for it," said Mr. Kallaway; and thus arrayed, he hastened down stairs to the door which looked into the court-yard.

"Vell, you're a rum un, you air!" exclaimed a livery-servant with uncommon ease of manner, as Mr. Kallaway appeared at the door near which he was loitering: "them's raly unexpressibles vith a wengeance. Out-an'-outers, I calls 'em."

"What, Mr. Pickwick's servant!" cried Mr. Kallaway.

"Blest if it ain't Mr. Kallavay, though," ejaculated Sam, as he touched his hat. "But vot spree are you arter now, as the mouse said ven the cat came purrin' at his hole?"

"I'm in a dreadful dilemma, Sam," began Mr. Kallaway, hastily.

"I calls it a blanket, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, dogmatically. "But if you says its a di-lemmy, I vonder vot you'd svear a counterpin vos."

"This is quite bad enough, Sam," said Mr. Kallaway, with a sigh.

"Then I s'pose a counterpin vould have been wusser," remarked Mr. Weller. "But how the devil came you in this here perdicament, as the nobleman said to his vife ven she returned home raythor groggy from a temperate society?"

"And what brought you here?" demanded Mr. Kallaway, when he related his new adventures: for he forgot at the moment that his situation admitted not of delay in parlance.

"Vy, another of our gen'lemen is come to jine us in Paris," answered Mr. Weller; "and I'm come to fetch his portmanty and pay his bill. Short accounts make long friends, as the highvayman said to the gen'leman vich vouldn't give up his purse."

"Could you borrow me a suit of clothes, Sam? I would pay you handsomely," enquired Mr. Kallaway.

"Sassage-maker at the corner o' the next street," answered Mr. Weller; "an' a wery nice man he is too. He's the chap as milled the English prize-fighter t'other day, at Vood's chop-house, and then iist polished off the landlord his-self 'cos he asked him to pay his bill. He's a Englishman by birth, an' exceeding proud his feller-countrymen is on him, to be sure."

"Well, well, Sam—do the best you can for me," exclaimed Mr. Kallaway. "My number is fifty-five, on the top-storey, up this staircase:"—and with these words Mr. Kallaway retreated with the utmost speed to his chamber.

"Raythor a queer go, that there, Sir," observed Mr. Weller to Mr. Lawson. "Beats cock-fighting all to shivers: O'Connell ain't nothin' to it."

"These are very singular adventures altogether," said Mr. Lawson.

"Wery," returned Sam. "But if you'll just tell me vot there is for to pay for Mr. Snodgrass as arrived last night, I'll settle that score."

"Step into the office," said Mr. Lawson, "and I will be with you in an instant. I must just run and take Mr. Kallaway a suit of clothes first."

Mr. Weller walked into the office and sate down at Mr. Lawson's desk. A quantity of writing-paper lay upon a shelf in the window; and that, together with the presence of other materials for writing, seemed to inspire Mr. Weller with a sudden idea, which he forthwith proceeded to put into execution. And this was the fruit of his labours:

"*Parris, france.*

"Mi dearest mari,

"i des say you thinks I've raythor negleckted you o' late, but vot vith vaitin' on the guvner and the other gen'lemen, and drinkin' brandy-an'-vater, with von or too other okkipashions eq-vally proffitable, my time hasn't bin my own, vich vos the remark made by the convict ven he vorked at the hulks in the service of government. but you no, mari mi dear, I alvays thinks on you and the hinfants; and as a prufe of it I hinclose a coppy of as tidy a go of werse as I ever see compozed. but don't go an' show 'em to every body as you sees, cos poetry ain't the thing now-a-days, an' ve must foller fashion as vell as our betters, as the chimbley-sveep observed to his-self ven he cocked his hat a-von side.

"many wery remarkable things I've seen an' heerd since I've bin in this powerful citty. but von thing is calkilated to charm a forinner more than all, and that is there ain't no beggers. or so fu that they ain't vorth speekin' ov. you doesn't see peeple dyin' here in the streets at night threw actival vant as you does in ingland, mari. but then you get as much bred here for thrippense as you does in ingland for ate-pense. all kinds o' sperrets too is werry chepe. and that must be a grate blessin' for the poor. I only vonder that on that wery account alone all the old vimen in ingland doesn't cum over to france. vot a reglar blo out they'd have. a westry dinner 'ud be nothin' to it.

"they say Pickvick's goin' to be married. I should jist like for to no vot rite old chaps as him has to take vives in their old hage. it ain't right, mari. but I can't think the guvner's in airnest. howsomever strange things vill okkur in this vorld, as the aktriss at the penny theayter said ven the nobleman asked her to marri him.

"I must now bring my letter to a conclushun. and vonce again mari don't go shoin' my werses to any von you no. it's all wery vell for such chaps as milton, and scott, and biron, an' som o' them covies as snodgrass raves about to rite poetry. but it don't do for a feller like me. the public von't see merrit vere merrit is.

"good bi. mari. make yourself appy.

"your lovin' husban' till deth

"SAMIVEL VELLER.

"errors accepted."

When Mr. Weller had brought this eminently affecting epistle to a conclusion, he took a very dirty piece of paper from his pocket, and

having opened it with an air of the most portentous mystery, perused the following effusion aloud, for the purpose of correcting any errors before he despatched it to his wife.

LINES.

There ain't no place, my dearest Mary,
Vere I don't think of thee,
Ven you're lookin' up the kitchen airey
Vith a hinfant on your knee.
Oh! ven you're gazin' through the vinder
To vatch for my return,
My heart, vich your charms has made a cinder,
To wery dust vill burn.
Dear Mary, I'll ever think of you;—
Ve haven't a dearer friend than our vife,
As the gen'leman said as vos transported for life
For havin' married two.

To Dulwich I shall haste so nimbly
Ven Pickvick gives the vord;
And seated in the kitchen chimbley,
I'll tell you all I've heard.
So, Mary, in a glass of brandy
I'll drink myself and you;
And ven I've next got the bottle handy,
I can toast the babbies too.
But best friends must part, thro' some mishap,
As the mouse observed, vith a troubled mind,
Ven he vos forced to leave half of his tail behind,
As he escaped from the trap.

"Vell—that ain't a bad ef-fusion, barring the length o' some of the lines," said Mr. Weller, with a smack of his lips, as he doubled up the paper once again, and placed it in the letter he had penned to his wife. "I don't vant to come Varren or Rowland, or any o' them wulgar poets, over my dear Mary—but I thought as how a couple o' werses vouldn't do no harm. Puts the vimen in a good humour vith their-selves. Sonnets is best though: they're the most powerful hingines of despairing lovyers. Much better than attempts at suicide. And then if a gen'leman does cut his throat now-a-days, the juries is so wery stupid, they alvays brings in a werdict o' *Fell in the Sea.* It's a national disgrace, that there system of werdicts is!"

Thus musing, Mr. Weller folded up his letter, wafered it, and had just terminated the direction, when Mr. Lawson made his appearance, Mr. Kallaway having been duly supplied with every article of the *toilette* which he required, through the kindness of the landlord.

Mr. Weller hastened to settle the account of Mr. Snodgrass with Mr. Lawson; and when that important matter was achieved, he threw the portmanteau of the former gentleman lightly on his left shoulder, stuck his hat just above his right ear, and sauntered out of the hotel in a manner which could not fail to edify all who saw him, in the same way as the whistle in which he indulged himself as he passed down the street, must have materially pleased those lovers of vocal music whose ears its volume reached.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.—MR. WELLER REGALES HIS MASTER AND THAT GENTLEMAN'S FRIENDS WITH TWO HIGHLY-EDIFYING CHARACTERISTIC SKETCHES RELATIVE TO AN ADVERTISEMENT-COLLECTOR FOR A LONDON PAPER.

For several days after his arrival in Paris, Mr. Snodgrass was occupied in visiting the different buildings and exhibitions worthy of notice; and the slight sketch of each which he entered upon his memorandum-book, bears ample testimony to the greatness of his poetic genius. Mr. Pickwick divided his time between Mrs. Weston and his endeavours to console the unhappy lady in the mad-house, on whom he frequently called, and concerning whose husband he made several enquiries. But the information he obtained relative to the unfortunate Melville, was of the most distressing kind; and the good-natured Mr. Pickwick was obliged to conceal a considerable portion of the truth from the miserable object of his chief solicitude.

One morning when the four friends were all seated at breakfast, Mr. Weller made his appearance with a card of very considerable dimensions. Upon this card were printed in a very bold type the following words:—"Mr. William Terry, M.A."

"Gen'leman 's a-vaitin'," observed Mr. Weller.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, "you may show him in."

And the gentleman was ushered into the room accordingly. He was a tall melancholy-looking, sallow-faced individual, with a small quick eye, and an expression of countenance which left a bad opinion concerning its proprietor in the minds of those who gazed upon it. He was dressed in deep black, and wore a white hat with black crape —probably for the sake of an agreeable contrast, which it certainly formed. Mr. Terry bowed very low to Mr. Pickwick, and then to Mr. Pickwick's friends; and this bow originated many others in return; and Mr. Terry hoped that the four gentlemen were very well; and the four gentlemen hoped Mr. Terry was the same; and then the whole party relapsed simultaneously into their chairs and a profound silence once again.

At length the pause was broken by Mr. Terry.

"I am come," said that gentleman, addressing himself to Mr. Pickwick, "to converse with you upon one of the most important of worldly affairs."

"A clergyman, I presume," said Mr. Pickwick with a smile.

"No, Sir, I am not," returned Mr. Terry. "But I prepare that," he added in a most mysterious voice, "which a clergyman is generally employed to terminate."

"Probably you are a lawyer, Sir?" suggested Mr. Winkle

"No, Sir—out again," exclaimed Mr. Terry; "although a lawyer is not unfrequently employed in the affairs I manage for the good of my fellow-creatures."

"You had better explain your profession, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick,

who felt himself very much bewildered by the conversation of the strange visitor.

"Did you not see M.A. upon my card?" enquired Mr. Terry, after he had satisfied himself by a long and scrutinizing glance round the room, that there were no unhallowed listeners present.

"I did notice the M.A.," returned Mr. Pickwick, "and thence inferred that you were a Master of Arts."

"Out again, Sir," rejoined Mr. Terry. "And yet a little art *is* occasionally required in my very complicated and delicate business."

Mr. Pickwick coughed impatiently—Mr. Tupman exchanged glances with Mr. Winkle—and Mr. Snodgrass expressed his spite by a desperate attack upon a cold tongue which stood before him.

"Well, gentlemen, to come to the point—for I see that you are rather anxious to know who I am," cried Mr. Terry, after a long pause, during which he had gazed most mysteriously at each of his auditors, "I am one of those who seek to join in the bonds of—"

"Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, a lucid idea striking him when he heard the word "bonds" mentioned; "you are a Money Agent—I see—M.A.—how dull we all were!"—and Mr. Winkle glanced with a triumphant air round the table.

"Out again, I declare!" said Mr. Terry. "But you will never guess—and must leave me to explain the mystery. I am a Matrimonial Advocate!"

"A what?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"A Matrimonial Advocate," was Mr. Terry's steady reply.

"And, pray, what is that?" said Mr. Winkle, unable to restrain his curiosity.

"One, Sir, who contrives matrimonial projects between young people," was the answer.

"But I *am* married," cried Mr. Winkle.

"And so am I," added Mr. Snodgrass, quitting the neat's tongue to speak with his own.

"And I am going to be," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

Mr. Tupman remained silent: he was neither married, nor engaged to be. To him, therefore, did Mr. Terry address himself.

"You are still single, I presume, Sir?" said Mr. Terry, extracting a letter from his waistcoat pocket.

Mr. Tupman nodded an affirmative.

"Have the kindness to read this, Sir," continued Mr. Terry; and he handed the letter to Mr. Tupman.

"Aloud?" demanded that gentleman.

"Certainly, if you please," was the amiable reply.

Mr. Tupman unfolded the letter, and read the following prospectus:—

"Mr. William Terry, late of Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, London, begs to inform his English friends and the English generally, in Paris, that he has opened a snug establishment in the Rue Montmartre, No. —, for the transaction of matrimonial negotiations, and hopes, by strict attention to his business and providing suitable matches at a moderate commission, to merit an extensive patronage. W. T. keeps a book of addresses, in which ladies and gentlemen, who

may be desirous of changing their conditions, are requested to insert their names. N.B. Gentlemen are respectfully informed that W. T. has a numerous assortment of widows, with considerable fortunes, upon his private list. Second N. B. Commissions to be paid in advance; and no money will be returned, if the match be not found suitable."

"It must be an excellent business, I should think," observed Mr. Tupman, as he returned the prospectus to Mr. Terry, who, however, requested him to keep it.

"Excellent!" cried the Matrimonial Advocate.

"So I should have thought," mused Mr. Tupman; and he glanced first at Mr. Pickwick, then at Mr. Terry; and then he suffered his eye to wander complacently over his own portly person.

"Can I do nothing for you in that way?" enquired Mr. Terry, who spoke through a very crooked nose.

"I! oh!—no—not I!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, again referring to the prospectus.

"Shall I look you out a nice little widow, with three or four children, and as many hundreds a-year?" demanded Mr. Terry. "Or would you prefer one without the children? The commission would be heavier—but the match might be the more eligible."

"Tupman," said Mr. Pickwick sternly, "trifle not with the best feelings that ennoble the heart of man, and which originate the most sacred of institutions!" added this truly great observer of human nature.

"My dear Sir," began Mr. Terry, "you really seem to take too severe a view of a transaction which—"

"Is as infamous as it is ridiculous!" cried Mr. Pickwick, rising from his chair, placing his left hand beneath his coat-tails, and waving his right in the air.

"Sir!" said Mr. Terry.

"Don't *Sir* me, Sir," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, whose imposing attitude had already made a deep impression upon the Matrimonial Advocate: "but take up your prospectus, and then take yourself off; and never presume to call here again with your improper notions of hymeneal connexions."

"Really, my dear Pickwick," remonstrated Mr. Tupman, "I think you are unnecessarily severe with this poor man."

"Sam!" cried Mr. Pickwick, without heeding the observations of his friend.

"Here you air, Sir," said that individual, who had been listening with his ear to the key-hole ever since Mr. Terry's arrival. . "Vot's the office now?"

"Show this gentleman to the door," cried Mr. Pickwick, when his faithful domestic appeared before him.

"Nothin's more easier," observed Mr. Weller, "perwided he'll jist give his-self the trouble to foller me. Woluntary locomotion's all the go now-a-days."

Mr. Terry rose to depart with a very pale face; and Mr. Tupman in vain endeavoured to conceal the disappointment he had experienced in having his conversation with the Matrimonial Advocate thus abridged.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said Mr. Terry, addressing himself to every one present save Mr. Pickwick, on whom he darted a look of mingled scorn and contempt as he walked leisurely past him towards the door.

"Now, then, coach is a-vaitin'," suggested Mr. Weller, in order to hasten the motion of the discomfited Matrimonial Advocate; "an' the hosses is so precious full o' beans, they won't stand for nobody nor nothin'. Brick valls u'dn't stop 'em if they vonce got their full sving. So go it, my hearties, as the cripples said to the chaps as jumped in sacks at the country-fair."

Thus exciting Mr. Terry to increase his speed, Mr. Weller conducted that gentleman towards the front door of the suite of apartments; and when he had seen him fairly down one flight of stairs, he returned to his masters to ascertain their opinion of the queer visitor.

"Very singular things one sees in this world every day," observed Mr. Snodgrass, as Mr. Weller re-entered the breakfast-room. "But the profession of Matrimonial Advocate is the most remarkable I ever yet heard of."

"Them and adwertising-clerks is the rummiest chaps in existence," said Mr. Weller

"And pray what are advertising-clerks, Sam?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, whose countenance had resumed its usual expression of kindness and philanthropy.

"Them chaps as goes about collectin' adwertisements for newspapers, and such like things," elucidated Mr. Weller. "Von on 'em vos vonce a partickler friend o' mine; and wery many queer goes he vos up to, he vos. He knew a dodge or two, or I'm blowed. Wery rich he vos too in shifts, but blessed poor in shirts."

"He must have been a man of very peculiar character," remarked Mr. Pickwick.

"I rayther think he vos, Sir," returned Mr. Weller. "Von day Dusty Bob—for that vos his name amongst his intimate friends—calls on a quack-doctor as had been adwertisin' his pills like bricks in another paper, for vich Bob vosn't engaged. The doctor takes him for a *gratis*-customer, and wery sharply asked him the natur' of his complaint.—'My complaint!' says Bob, who vos a Irishman from Kilkenny: 'an' faith, doctor, it's against yourself, for sendin' your adwertisements to t'other paper instead o' mine. So I've jist stepped in to perwent your honour's honour from committing a like hact of injustice in future.'—'Injustice, friend,' says the doctor: 'there ain't no injustice in the case. I gives my adwertisements vere I chooses, an' no mistake.'—'That's the wery thing,' says Bob, 'of vich I have to complain; for as I puts money into your pocket, you ought for to return the compliment, any how. The fact is,' continues Bob, 'I'm von o' your wery best customers, an' I reckomends your pills to all the vorld. I've svallowed nineteen boxes on 'em in the space o'two months; an' I makes my vife and eleven small children svallow 'em too ven they haven't got nothin' else to eat. Och! I knows vot's good for 'em, if they don't!'—'I'm wery much obleeged to you, my dear feller,' says the doctor, softenin' rayther in his manners, and tellin' Bob to take a cheer; 'wery much, indeed; but I'd like to be made aweer o' the reason for your svallowin' all them pills.'—'Reason, is it, doctor, that

you mane?' says Dusty Bob. 'Och, I'm not at all partickler—I takes 'em for every complaint as 'appens to me. I svallowed a whole box-full on 'em t'other day, as I vos in a melancholy state o' mind, and vouldn't rouse myself not by no means. Faith, they roused me, though!'—'I des say they did,' observes the doctor, vith a smile o' pleasure.—'Vell, Sir,' says Bob, in a wery insinivatin' manner, 'von o' my boys had hurted his foot, and vould keep to his bed in spite o' me svearin' he couldn't valk: so I poked forty-two pilis down his throat over night, and the next day, your honour—och! and did'nt he valk about as vell as myself? Now,' continues Bob, 'I'm sartain I've airned your adwertisements; an' I'm blowed if the clerk o' the *Eagle* ever took the walley o' von box o' your pills in his life; an' if he vishes to dispute it, he has nothin' to do but to svallow as many as I have done already, an' then ve can start fair, your honour. Ve vill each begin a course, an' he who gives vay, shall lose the adwertisements.'—This wery interestin' proposal quite von the doctor's heart, and he gived the adwertisements for a whole year to Dusty Bob, upon the spot. Mouldy Joe, the clerk of the *Eagle*, killed his-self in right down desperation, a fortnit arterwards."

"Mr. Dusty Robert was a very ingenious person," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! that's nothin' to vot he vould do," said Mr. Weller, raking his budget of mendacular anecdote for a more spicey example still.

"Isn't it indeed?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"It raly ain't," continued Sam, encouraged by his master's observation. "On another occasion he valks wery quietly into the shop o' Missus Raffinay, the fashionable manty-maker at the Vest-end, and tumbles head-foremost into a room vere seven or eight wery pretty young gals vos a vorking avay like vild-fire.—'Oh! for the love o' Jasus,' says Bob, 'vich on ye is Missus Raffinay?'—'Neither on us,' vos the ansver gived by a young gal vith black eyes an' a yeller gown. 'She's so deeply engaged at this present speaking,' continues the young gal, 'that she vouldn't see her own mother if she vos to rise from the grave.'—'Vell, then, I'm a ruined man,' says Bob, 'if I can't get to the spache o' Missus Raffinay this blessed minnit.'—'Can't you name your business?' says the gal.—'Och, name it, is it, that you mane?' says Bob; 'and so I vill to her ownself.—'Air you then just come for a little beggin' hexpedition, young man?' says the young gal.—'Beggin', is it, that you mane now?' says Bob; 'and sure it is, my dear: but it's beggin' pardon for my sins; and if Missus Raffinay don't grant it, I'll jist jump into the river on my vay home, and drown myself afore I gets there!'—'No, don't do that 'ere,' says the gal; 'for here comes Missus herself.'—'Ma'am,' says Bob, ven he seed the great concealer o' feminine sins approachin' vith a wery stately air, 'you sees a humble penitentiary afore you, as is terrified out o' the small supply o' vits vich he ever possessed, lest he shouldn't obtain your pardon for his negleck.'—'Vot negleck?' says the lady: 'you ain't bein' guilty o' none to me, as I knows of.'—'Och, and that's wery kind o' you Ma'am,' says Dusty Bob, vith a low bow; 'but the fact is that I forgot to put your adwertisement into the *Nightingale* newspaper this mornin', and there's likely to be rayther a kick-up about it.'—'But I never sends no adwertisements to the *Nightingale*,' says Missus Raffinay.—'Sure

an' I'm wery happy to hear it, my lady,' says Bob. 'I thought it vos all my carelessness, as ven I took the *Nightingale* this mornin' to the Countess of Flareumup, she jumps up in a hurry and says, Och, and your welcome, Bob, says she, for I've been starvin' here this last half-hour, says she, a-vaitin' to see Missus Raffinay's adwertisement before I goes out, cos I doesn't know her address. So I sets about lookin' for the adwertisement for her ladyship; but devil a adwertisement vos there. The Countess vos exceedin' wexed, and so I jist run here, quite flabbergasted, for fear I should be the means of your losing her custom, an' to ask you vot I shall do.'—'Oh!' says the manty-maker, 'pray take a copy of my adwertisement, and get 'em put into the *Nightingale* as soon as you can; an' to-morrow do me the faviour to pint it out to the Countess ven you takes her paper.'—'That I vill,' says Bob, 'and bless your sveet face into the bargain, my dear; an' I shall see you in my dreams as beautiful as the goddess Wulcan, only more dacent in dress.'—So Bob succeeded on this adwentur as vell as on t'others."

Scarcely had Mr. Weller brought this second characteristic sketch to a conclusion, when he was called to the front-door by a loud ring at the bell; and M. Dumont was shortly ushered into the presence of Mr. Pickwick and his friends.

"Any news of the Count and his cousin?" enquired Mr. Snodgrass, with a smile.

"None," returned the Gendarme. "As for the female swindler, we could do but little with her even if we were to catch her; but Crashem would be sent to the Gallies for five years."

"That's a wery cheerful prospect," observed Mr. Weller, who was clearing away the breakfast materials: "Newgate's nothin' to it, as the man said at the tread-mill."

"Sam," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Sir," said Mr. Weller.

"You may retire," added Mr. Pickwick.

"Thank'ee, Sir," said Mr. Weller, and he disappeared in company with the tray and china-ware.

The conversation then turned upon a variety of interesting matters, and amongst others, to a subject which recalled M. Dumont's facilities of tale-telling to the memories of his companions. A request that he would favour them with a story was therefore proffered; and as the weather was not exceedingly inviting, the Gendarme thought that an hour could not be wiled away more profitably. He accordingly narrated that which will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ROSE SEVIGNE.—A TALE

THE HEROINE AND HER FATHER.—EUGENE ARCHAMBAULT.—THE LETTER.—INTERVIEW IN THE CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE DAME.—THE STRANGER.—THE BRIDAL.—THE LOTTERY TICKET.—THE EVENT.

In a dark and gloomy street, in the immediate vicinity of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, there is an old house which for many years has

not been tenanted. Its last occupants were an old man and his daughter; and to them my tale has reference.

It was in the year 1815, that an individual, of about fifty-five years of age, went to inhabit the old house I have just alluded to. An aged female, with a young child in her arms, accompanied him to his gloomy abode. The infant was his daughter; and upon her he doted with an excess of tenderness which few men ever manifest. But to the old nurse he never uttered a word, save when the necessity of giving some orders relative to his domestic arrangements compelled him to break his rigid taciturnity

Sevigné was the name by which this mysterious being designated himself. That of his child was Rose. The old woman was called Marguerite.

No other lodgers occupied the dreary abode, save they; and although the dwelling was extensive, and Sevigné only furnished four or five apartments, still he refused to let a portion of it to other tenants. He was not poor, but he was economical—or rather, frugal, save in reference to his beloved child; and on her he lavished every luxury, as she grew up, which a fond parent could provide. And, certainly, if the most lovely beings in this world deserve the most costly things, nothing that her father gave her was too good for Rose. At the age of seventeen she was the most lovely creature my eyes had ever beheld: the faultlessness of her features and matured form rivalled the just proportions of the Venus of Medicis itself. But she belonged to a world whose brightest ornaments are born to the most sad destinies; and a Rose in beauty, as well as in name, she shared the rose's fate, and perished after having bloomed but a short time!

In disposition she was as amiable as she was lovely in person. The sweetness of her temper was only equalled by the generosity of her character. Her manners were replete with frankness and candour—her soul was like an Æolian harp that vibrates to the slightest breeze: it was ever awake to the calls of poverty and to the exigences of the needy

But as she had been reared in the utmost ignorance of the world, and in an almost unbroken solitude (as it may be called, for a creature of her age), she was as little acquainted with its virtues as she was with its vices. She recognised the difference between pleasure and pain, because sensation was the author of her discrimination in that respect: but the conventional forms of justice and injustice, turpitude, and virtue were scarcely known by her. She was like a beautiful savage—or a wild flower with a lovely name—a creature whose only divinity is the impulse of Nature. But—oh! so lovely, and so innocent was she—that beauteous rose—that, when imprisoned in the gloomy dwelling from whence she seldom issued, she seemed like a choice plant flourishing, solitary and alone, in the rude court of a deserted castle. Or like a beautiful butterfly fluttering amongst the mazes of a dark and gloomy forest, was Rose in the apartments of her father!

And yet this angelic being—this creature—to whom the distinctions which sophists have drawn between the conventional extremes of virtue and vice before mentioned, were unknown—had a secret but partially revealed to her father. And that was her love—her sincere, her tender love for Eugene Archambault.

Eugene was a youth of extraordinary talent and surprising genius There was scarcely a subject, however scientific, however profound, however learned, on which he could not only converse with facility, but also with judgment. He had read deeply, and retained in his powerful memory all he gathered from books or from the verbal opinions of learned men with whom he conversed. But he was poor, and entirely dependent upon his writings for subsistence. These produced a sorry income: still as his wants were circumscribed, the pittance his pen procured him would have been sufficient to ensure his felicity, had not his deficiency of pecuniary resources prevented him from becoming the husband of the lovely girl to whom he was sincerely attached, and of whose reciprocal devotedness to him he was well assured. They had been secretly engaged to each other for upwards of six months; and although Eugene as yet saw but little chance of being united to his Rose, still did his affection for her appear only to increase and to derive fresh vigour from every difficulty that presented itself.

But the saturnine father of Rose had private reasons of his own for consulting the worldly interests of his daughter rather than her mental happiness. This he did not, however, from artful perverseness nor cruelty; but because he was urged by a terrible vow to dispose of his child's destiny in a manner which suited not her own predilection.

Eugene visited Rose but seldom. Yet when the sanguine youth ventured to solicit her father's assent to his suit, a cold and repulsive negative was not even attempted to be softened down by expressions of commiseration and condolence on his part; so true it is that selfishness or the idiosyncratic ideas of false honour close the heart against the influence of all Nature's kindest feelings

Rose anxiously awaited the result of her lover's appeal; and when she met him in the passage, as he issued from the chamber where the austere parent had received him, her heart sank within her. She read at once in his countenance the declaration of their doom—she saw that their sentence of separation was marked in characters far too legible upon his face.

"There is no hope, dear Eugene?" said she.

"None, Rose—none," was the sad reply. "It were vain—worse than vain—useless—mad, in fine, to endeavour to shake those stern resolves which condemned me to eternal misery—to sorrow—to despair!"

"All is not so bad as that, perhaps," said the poor girl, while large tears stood in her beautiful eyes.

"Yes—yes—'tis hopeless," exclaimed Eugene. "Cursed poverty, that thus condemns us to linger on without a chance of ever being united! Cursed indigence, that drives me to—to—"

"Silence, Eugene—silence," said Rose. "Moderate your passions—we must not despair. We are young—we love each other—I shall continue faithful—and I cannot doubt your attachment."

"We are young—and I can work," cried Archambault, deriving a partial consolation from the words of her he adored. "Adieu, Rose:—my stay here might be suspected—we shall endeavour to see each other occasionally; and, then—I am not altogether interdicted from visiting the house. My calls must have long intervals between them—for such restrictions has your parent imposed!"

"Adieu, Eugene—and do not despair!"

The lovers separated with tears, with sighs, and with sorrow, and with repeated oaths of constancy.

When Archambault reached his lodgings in the Marais, he did not foolishly give way, as might have been expected from his former expressions of passion, to all the frivolities of distress; but he sate down with renewed ardour to complete a laborious work in the compilation of which he was engaged by that prince of French publishers, Charles Gosselin. Several thousands of francs had already been paid to him as he progressively advanced towards the termination of his task; and now about twelve hundred more remained to be paid him. He therefore continued his toils with unprecedented ardour, and at length laid down his pen with unfeigned delight. He hurried to his employer, delivered the manuscript, received the sum due to him, and solicited more work. This request was accorded; and with a thousand expressions of the most heartfelt gratitude to the encouraging bookseller, who was himself extremely satisfied with the youth, he hurried homewards to commence his new undertaking.

A crowd opposite a shop in one of the streets which he had occasion to pass through, for a moment caught his eye and rivetted his attention. He hurried to the spot, mingled from motives of curiosity with the mob, and succeeded in gaining a full view of a prospectus stuck against the window of the shop, and which had thus attracted the notice of the passengers. It gave a long and flaming account of a magnificent castle and estate in Germany, which the owner had resolved to dispose of by way of a lottery. The produce of the property amounted to a hundred and eighty thousand francs a year; and the principal bankers, librarians, and general agents in Europe, were employed to dispose of the tickets, which were sold for twenty francs apiece. Archambault for the first time felt an inclination to gamble. The allurement was so great—his sanguine disposition at the moment caused him to forget the numberless chances against the success of any one individual—all flattering Hope whispered pleasing tales in his ears—and he entered the shop to purchase a ticket. The affair was speedily concluded—he paid his twenty francs without the slightest reluctance—and joyfully regained his own dwelling.

On his table lay a letter: he seized it, and hastily recognised the handwriting of Rose's father. With a trembling hand he tore open the epistle—and in the all-absorbing contents he instantly forgot his fairy dreams—his golden anticipation—his future prospects. The contents ran thus:—

"It is with sorrow that I am compelled to repeat my former determination; and in making you acquainted with the approaching marriage of my daughter, I trust to your honour as a man—and as a gentleman—not to persist in visiting Rose under present circumstances, even at the long intervals you have so strictly conserved. You know that her peace of mind must depend upon your discretion in this matter, and that as her father I should be justified in compelling that which I merely solicit.

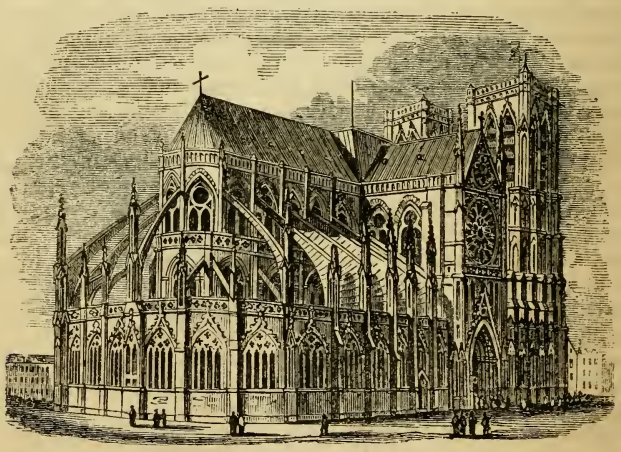
"When my late and deeply-lamented wife was upon her death-bed, while Rose was but an infant, I pledged myself that one—to whom Rose

was betrothed, even as a child, and who, though considerably older than she—old enough, indeed, to have been her father—but who promised to espouse her for certain family reasons—I swore, I say, that Rose should be united to none save to him. And then the spirit of my wife fled in peace!

"Need I say more?

"SEVIGNE."

The astonishment and grief of Eugene can be better conceived than described. It exceeded all power of description. The vessel of his felicity had foundered on the rock of Disappointment, and left him a prey to the wild waves of Despair. For the rest of the day he sate immoveably upon his chair, without ever suffering his thoughts to wander from the centre of their attraction. He forgot his self-imposed, but necessary toils for the indulgent bookseller, and rejected the food that his servant proffered him. Suddenly he recollected that the next day was the Sabbath, and that Rose, attended by old Marguerite, was habitually present at divine service, in the Cathedral Church of Notre



Dame. It was there that they first met—it was in that stupendous edifice that they had first exchanged glances of affection—and it was in its sacred neighbourhood that they first told their love! It was also there, then, thought Archambault, that he would see her for the last time, and speak decidedly relative to the affair which naturally interested him more than any other in the world.

An anxious night yielded to a gloomy morning; and Eugene started from his couch, determined to seek an interview with Rose. He knew that it was useless to hasten to the Cathedral before mid-day: he therefore endeavoured to compose himself until the hour that should decide his fate. Presently a loud knock at his door startled him—and a stranger was ushered into the room. He was a man who had probably seen fifty summers: his venerable appearance impressed Eugene with more than sentiments of respect—it struck him with awe: and he

unavoidably cast down his eyes as he requested the stranger to be seated. After a short pause, a few general remarks led to a conversation relative to Eugene's situation in life, his prospects, and his employment.

"I do not ask, young man," said the stranger, "from motives of curiosity. I am interested in your welfare—and would willingly do something to serve you."

"Might I inquire," asked Archambault respectfully, "who kindly appealed to your bounty in my behalf?"

"A gentleman whom you know," was the reply: "his name I am not at liberty to mention."

"I know no friend save M. Gosselin," returned Eugene eagerly.

"It's well," said the stranger shaking his head: "question me not—but listen. It is enough for you that I am desirous of serving you."

Eugene now began to relate, in a moving manner, the history of his unsuccessful suit with the father of Rose: but in the midst of his sentimental narrative, the stranger again interrupted him, and in somewhat an authoritative tone of voice desired him to be silent. Eugene felt his cheek flushing—but his affection for Rose compelled him to restrain the incipient choler rising in his breast, as he well knew that to defeat the compassionate intentions of his visitor was not to advance himself on the road to wealth.

"Paris," said the stranger, "is not a fitting place nor a good school for young men: I propose to give you a situation in a banker's house at Havre, with a salary of five thousand francs a year."

"I am infinitely obliged, Monsieur," said Archambault;—"infinitely obliged: but I cannot yet quit Paris."

"Oh! I understand," said the stranger. "'Tis that young lady—Rose Sevigné—whose charms fascinate and detain you. But you must renounce all hopes of her; for a premature marriage would neither benefit your affairs—"

"Oh! Monsieur—it would make me happy!" exclaimed Eugene, with all the energy that love imparts to the expression of the tongue. "And with an assurance of the place you offer me, I might still obtain her father's consent—however deeply his honour be involved in promises to another."

"Young man," said the stranger, positively, "I am willing to do you good; but I cannot blindly see you throw yourself away. Accept my offer—go to Havre this very day"

"Impossible!" interrupted Eugene.

"To-morrow, then, at farthest." persisted that singular old man.

"No—no—never will I quit Paris, till I be assured of the fate of Rose," ejaculated Archambault.

"Stay as long as you will, perverse boy—if it must be so," cried the stranger: "only promise that you will not press your suit with her."

"Do you know her—are you acquainted with her?" demanded Eugene; and without waiting for an answer he went on,—"for if you did, you would not wish to separate us."

"Speak to me frankly, Eugene Archambault," said the stranger, rising from his chair, and chinking gold in his pocket. "You are poor—your gains are small and uncertain—you say that without fortune

Rose never can be your's—persist in your foolish love, and I abandon you—and then you will be as far advanced as before. Accept my propositions, and I am ready this moment to fulfil my engagement—a situation of five thousand francs a year, and double that sum in advance."

This profuse offer, with the severe condition attending it, struck Eugene as somewhat extraordinary; and he hesitated ere he replied, uncertain what to think; for he knew enough of the world to be well aware that such instances of extraordinary generosity were rare.

"Are you decided?" enquired the stranger, after a long pause.

"I am," returned Eugene.

"To accept—"

"To refuse your offers," said Archambault, firmly.

"Reflect—you will be sorry when it is too late," persisted the stranger.

"Thank you, Sir,—a thousand thanks: *I love Rose!*" returned Eugene: "that is my answer."

The stranger urged his proposition no farther, but withdrew in sorrow and in anger.

Eugene had but little time to make his remarks upon this singular visit, and upon the extensive temptations so arduously held out, and so sedulously rejected, ere he was obliged to hurry to the cathedral of Notre Dame. As he passed by the Morgue, curiosity impelled him to enter; for many, with anxious faces, were running in and out. A disfigured corpse was stretched upon one of the benches, and a shuddering crowd was surveying it. Never had the idea of death been fraught with such terror to the mind of Archambault as at that moment. He turned away in disgust from the shocking spectacle, and never stopped till he stood beneath the right-hand entrance to the mighty fabric of Notre Dame. He entered—the service had already commenced—the Archbishop of Paris, in his purple robes, officiated upon the occasion—and as Eugene walked towards the choir, where the altar-piece stands, he looked anxiously around for his beloved Rose. She was there—her servant knelt beside her—and they both prayed fervently. And the eyes of Rose were raised to heaven—and her hands were clasped firmly together—and her lips moved as she murmured the prayers that ascended as holy incense to the throne of eternal grace. Archambault drew nigh to her—but he dared not intrude with a whisper upon such an attitude of unfeigned devotion. There was religion without hypocrisy—virtue without ostentation!

Rose shortly relinquished her suppliant posture, and noticed the vicinity of her lover. She recognised him with a bland but melancholy smile, which seemed to say, "I was praying for us both—for, God knows! we have need of prayer to solicit the consolation of the Highest!"

When the service was concluded, the lovers met at the door of the cathedral, and immediately commenced a hurried conversation; for each had much to say, and both knew how little time they had for social discourse.

"Is it true, dear Rose, that your sire will sacrifice you to another?" asked Eugene.

"Too true," returned the lovely girl; "and he, whom they would

compel me to espouse, is one whom I can never love;" and the unhappy Rose was scarcely able to contain her emotions.

"His name, Rose?" demanded Archambault: "what is his name—that I may know to curse him?" enquired the hasty Eugene, speaking with all his accustomed warmth and energy.

"The Baron De Rémonville, Eugene," was the answer;—"an individual, whose immense wealth cannot compensate for age, for a proud disposition, and for the hatred which circumstances cause me to experience in regard to him."

"Detested Peer! But, Rose," pursued the young author, solemnly and sorrowfully, "are you sure that grandeur and ostentatious pomp cannot tempt you to forget—"

"Eugene, you wrong me," said the heroic girl; "I will sooner unite myself to *Death* than to the Baron De Rémonville!"

As Rose uttered these words with considerable emphasis—an emphasis that could not be misconstrued—Archambault bethought himself of the Morgue, and shuddered violently.

A long pause ensued.

"But do not be alarmed, dear Eugene," proceeded Rose, "my father has procrastinated the marriage for one month: within that time something must arrive favourable to us—or else—"

"Or else—what?" demanded Archambault, eagerly.

"We will die together!" returned the heroic girl; and as they had now reached the obscure and darksome street where her father's dwelling was situate, they were compelled to bid each other "Farewell!"

"Till next Sunday," said Rose, mournfully.

"Till next Sunday, dear girl," re-echoed Eugene: and they parted.

Rose entered the house; and as Archambault was continuing his way homewards, he saw the stranger standing at the corner of the street, watching him.

"You are unusually devout, it seems, young man," said the stranger, in an ironical tone of voice: "you come direct from Notre Dame, perhaps?"

"I have a proper sentiment of religion, *Monsieur*," returned Eugene, mildly, but decidedly, as if he were desirous of exemplifying his indifference to a continuation of the colloquy.

"And you have not repented of refusing my offers, Eugene?" said the stranger.

"No. I thank you; and in thanking you, can repay your gratuitous and exceeding bounty in no other terms."

"And, if I mistake not," pursued the stranger, "you still persist in seeing Rose Sevigné?"

"Yes—and shall continue to love her as I hitherto have done, returned Archambault, civilly: for he could not find it in his heart to repulse the old man who nevertheless thus made such impertinent inquiries.

"You persist, incautious youth!" exclaimed the stranger. "You persist in your frivolous resolutions? You court poverty by perverseness; and you refuse to acquire wealth by submission?

"On your terms, certainly," said Archambault. "But, tell me wherefore you take an interest in me, and wherefore your conditions are so severe?"

"No matter," hastily replied the old man. "I have been already married myself—and am now a widower. But I had a son some twenty years ago; and had he lived, or had he been left to me—had not death or malice prevailed, I know not which—he would have been about your age. How old are you?"

"Twenty-three," was the respectful answer.

"Mine would have been about that age, also," continued the old man: "but—but—I lost him."

"He disappeared?"

"Yes—and now I am alone in the world, and I seek to find comfort in another," said the stranger; "and an individual steps in the way, and refuses to allow me the enjoyment of that happiness in my old age."

"Perhaps," thought Eugene, "the son of this poor old man may even be worse off than I. Perhaps he may not have found, as I did in my infant years, a kind guardian to educate him; and perhaps no compassionate one was ready to protect his orphan condition, as in my early days—"

"Eugene, you reflect upon what I say?"

"*Monsieur*, I have reflected," returned Archambault, firmly; for he imagined that the stranger alluded to his former magnificent offers.

"Then go!" ejaculated the old man: "I abandon your interests for ever!"—and having uttered these words, he walked rapidly away

"There is something singular in this individual," thought Eugene, as he retraced his steps to his solitary abode. But he did not spare much time to ponder on the affairs of the stranger: his own interests, his love, and his engagements with the bookseller occupied his mind, and rendered him callous to the most important passing events of the day.

On the following morning he received a letter, the contents of which ran thus:—

"You have not condescended to succumb to my wishes: I am now obliged to compel the obedience of my daughter. For the future she will no longer proceed to the Cathedral on the Sabbath-day; nor will she quit my house till the Baron de Rémonville be prepared to conduct her to the altar. Oh! wherefore wouldst thou seek to destroy a hope I have reserved for years—a hope which has urged me to live and to rear my daughter in the strictest retirement—a hope which a solemn vow to my departed wife compelled me to entertain?

"SEVIGNE."

It were useless to describe the young man's grief. His best consolation was gone; and he fell back in his chair overpowered with excess of internal agony. A partial delirium and high fever succeeded; he was conveyed to his bed; and a surgeon was called in to attend him. He continued for days and weeks in this lamentable situation, raving incessantly of Rose, and talking wildly of his disappointed love. One thing, however, was remarkable—that a chain of peculiar workmanship which hung round his neck, appeared to occupy also a considerable portion of his wandering imagination; for

if any one approached his couch, he instantly grasped that gold chain, and seemed fearful lest it should be taken from him.

A month had passed away, and the Baron de Rémonville's lordly equipage stopped at the door of the dwelling where his intended victim resided. She was already arrayed in her bridal garments; but beneath her vest, next her heart, was concealed a small bottle of poison. She had now nought to live for—nought to bind her to existence. Her lover (of whose illness she knew not) had made no effort to see her: no letter from him had been received to console her. His infidelity was therefore, she thought, too apparent. He had forgotten her; and although the ceremony might be completed, the night, she was determined, should not witness the happiness of the Baron, for he would find her a corpse in the nuptial couch!

Armed with the unnatural fortitude such resolutions gave her, she appeared in the apartment where her intended husband, her father, and a few friends of the Baron, were assembled. All were prepared to proceed to the *Mairie* of the *Arrondissement*, and conclude the civil portion of the ceremony. But the door was no sooner opened by the domestic to make way for the cavalcade, than a youth, pale, and with a haggard and wild glance, rushed into the room.

"Rose—dear Rose!" he exclaimed, and clasped her in his arms.

"Monsieur Archambault—this rudeness—" began the father, with anger depicted upon his countenance.

"Ah!" cried Eugene, now for the first time glancing at the white dress of Rose; "this is indeed providential! An hour ago only have I risen from the bed of sickness; and I am now in time to witness my adored one espouse another. O Rose—Rose!"

"Eugene—they compel me!" exclaimed the poor girl, clasping her hands together, and raising her beauteous blue eyes to heaven

In the mean time Sevigné had despatched one of the Baron's domestics to summon the aid of the police; and I was called to remove the intruder.

"Here is a Gendarme!" said the Baron.

"Heavens! is that the bridegroom?" enquired Eugene, with a bitter smile; for in the Baron de Rémonville he recognised the stranger who had so earnestly tempted him to leave Paris. "I refused your proffers with firmness," continued Eugene, "when I was in abject poverty; and now that I am rich—"

"Rich, Eugene!" ejaculated Rose, a slight hope for the first time awakening in her bosom.

"Yes—rich—rich!" shouted Eugene, wildly. "I have riches enough to tempt the avarice of every selfish father in France! Of all the estates in Germany, one of the finest belongs to me!"

"He has lost his reason, poor boy," whispered Sevigne, in a compassionate tone of voice, to the Baron de Rémonville.

"Mad! No—not I. Listen for a moment, and interrupt me not," cried Archambault. I purchased a ticket in the German lottery for a vast estate: you doubtless know its description well. Yesterday I was lying upon a sick bed, without the necessaries of life. I had not bread to eat. This morning, the numbers, which had gained the prize, reached Paris; and at the moment when I was pondering how to obtain a meal, my servant entered with the joyful tidings. That estate is mine!"

Archambault sank upon a chair exhausted, and demanded water. His cheek became still more pale than the illness had left it; and he felt as if he were about to faint.

"Oh! let me not die yet!" said he, in pathetic appeal to his Maker.

I hastened forward to open his waistcoat, loosened his collar, and exposed his neck to the air. The gold chain of peculiar workmanship, to which I before alluded, caught the eye of the Baron de Rémonville. He rushed towards the fainting youth, examined the chain for a moment, and cried in a hasty tone of voice, "That chain—whence came it? Speak—Oh! speak."

Eugene raised his head feebly, and replied as well as he was able to the questions that were put to him: and it was from his mouth that I gathered his previous history.

"My son—my son! my long lost son!" exclaimed the Baron; and he clasped Eugene in his arms.

"Your son!" ejaculated Sevigne.

"Yes—my son—my dear son!" continued the Baron. "And now—Oh! let him conduct to the altar her whom I was about to drag thither an unwilling bride!"

"Is this truth, or is it a dream?" enquired Eugene, on whose countenance a deadly pallor was cast.

"No—it is truth—reality!" whispered Rose in her lover's ears. "Rouse yourself, dear Eugene.'

"Oh! it is hard to die now," faintly murmured the unfortunate youth. "Happiness awaits me—but I shall not live to enjoy it. Oh! I feel an oppression here," he continued, pressing his hand upon his forehead, "and I know that I have but a few moments to exist. Rose—dear Rose—and you, my father, where are you?"

"We are here—we are both here—we are near thee, dear boy," exclaimed the weeping Baron, while Rose's voice was lost in heart-wrung sighs and sobs.

"Oh! it is sweet to die thus!" murmured Eugene: "now I am happy!"

And with these words his spirit fled for ever.

Mr. Pickwick's memorandum-book does not inform us of the precise fate of the unhappy Rose.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE HOSTILE PROCEEDINGS OF MR. NASSAU SIFFKIN AGAINST MR. HOOK WALKER.—THE TRIAL THAT TAKES PLACE IN CONSEQUENCE. —MR. PICKWICK AND MR. SNODGRASS GET OUT OF A CABRIOLET INTO A SCRAPE.

It is delightful to trace the pursuits of memorable men. One fine morning Mr. Hook Walker, whose general appearance was tolerably blooming, save in respect to his linen which seemed to indicate that he had lost the confidence of his washerwoman, was walking tranquilly and quietly up and down one of the secluded avenues in the Gardens of the Tuileries. His companion upon this occasion was no other than the erudite Mr. Septimus Chitty; and from all we have been enabled to understand, we are induced to believe that this walk was the result of an appointment given the day before, having for its object the holding of a committee of ways and means for the purpose of alleviating the pecuniary necessities of the two gentlemen forming the aforesaid committee.

Mr. Walker and Mr. Chitty having conceded to each other, with the most amiable condescension, the point "that money must be raised," entered upon a lengthy debate upon the best method for accomplishing their purpose. When a government contracts loans and pays neither principal nor interest, the transaction is denominated a financial failure, or some such highly appropriate term; but when two gentlemen do the same, it is voted a decided swindle, because it does not happen to be upon a scale sufficiently grand. This dilemma, therefore, Messieurs Walker and Chitty were desirous of avoiding. The former gave it as his firm opinion that "they ought to do a bit of stiff;" while the latter was equally persuaded of the propriety of "raising the wind by flying a kite." They then unanimously agreed "that they were both already swimming in an actual sea of stiff;" and at length resolved upon "making old Pickwick come down with the dust."

"How shall we get a stamp?" enquired Mr. Hook Walker, tapping his breeches' pocket, in which nothing but a bunch of keys sent forth metallic sounds.

"Ah! that's the bore—*aper est*," returned Mr. Septimus Chitty. "In a day or two I shall receive a few pounds from England for a little poem I have written for a gentleman. But that is not to-day."

With this self-evident proposition Mr. Walker immediately concurred.

"And a deuced good poem it is too," proceeded Mr. Chitty, his financial affairs being lost in a moment of poetic enthusiasm. "Shall I read it to you?"

Mr. Walker did mutter something about a wish to condemn the poem to the regions inhabited by Pluto: but Mr. Chitty did not hear the remark. The poem was therefore inflicted upon Mr. Walker, as we now inflict it upon our readers.

WONDERFUL FACT.

Van Amburgh, the tamer of all the fierce scions
Of the savage brute race—both tigers and lions—
One evening was nearly becoming a feast
For the half-famished maw of his favourite beast.

He entered the cage with his whip in his hand,
And dauntless amidst the fierce crew did he stand;
Then played with their mouths, without terror or dread—
But the lion waxed wrathful and snapped off his head.

The actors they screamed, and the audience ran out,
And confusion prevailed around and about:—
The corpse from the cage by the keeper was torn,
And thence into the Green-room immediately borne.

Now, by some lucky chance, the keeper had got
Of Holloway's Family Ointment a pot;
And with it he rubbed both the neck and the head—
Then he stuck them together altho' they were dead.

Will marvels e'er cease? the head opened its eyes,
And the bosom gave vent to two or three sighs·
The legs began quivering down to the toes—
Then the arms felt th' effects—and Van Amburgh arose!

You need not believe it unless you're inclined—
But wherefore to truth should we all remain blind?
Moreover—we know that while this I indite,
The brute-tamer's alive, and performs every night.

"Have you got a five-franc piece?" enquired the unsentimental Mr. Hook Walker, when Mr. Chitty brought this poem to a conclusion.

"What do you think of my production?" enquired the poet.

"Oh! admiration is not a part of my system," hastily observed Mr. Walker: "but discount is."

"And what do you want five francs for?" demanded Mr. Chitty.

"Why—to buy a stamp with, to be sure," was the immediate answer: "and then we can drink a bottle of beer with the rest."

"I really do not think my exchequer is so extensive," said Mr. Chitty: "I am very short—*valde brevis*—at this moment, and have nothing about me but my *loculus liber*—pocket-book."

"Here's Siffkin, I declare!" suddenly cried Mr. Hook Walker, with a vehemence extremely at variance with the equanimity of a systematic man: and in a few moments the two friends were accosted by Mr. Nassau Siffkin.

"Halloo, Siffkin," began Mr. Walker: "an early lounge is also a part of *your* system, it appears."

"Pray don't *Siffkin* me," cried that gentleman, flourishing a stick in extreme wrath around his head. "I am going to horse-whip you, Sir, with this stick!"

"Who? me!" ejaculated Mr. Chitty.

"No—but your friend, Sir—and I am glad he *has* a friend to witness his chastisement," cried Mr. Siffkin. "I also should have had a friend to see fair play, but Mr. Scuttle is too fat to walk fast, and so I was obliged to leave him to follow me hither."

"Pray, my dear Sir," began Mr. Walker, "what part of your system allows this—"

"That, Sir—and this —and that!" replied Mr. Siffkin, practically illustrating the various peculiarities of his system with various fierce blows upon Mr. Hook Walker's shoulders.

"Hit him again, Walker!" shouted Mr. Chitty. "Pitch into him—do you hear?" added the great poet, hiding himself behind a tree.

"You come and help me—will you?" roared Mr. Walker, while Mr. Siffkin continued to inflict condign punishment first upon Mr. Walker's right arm, then on his left, then across his back, and lastly by way of a little variation, on the calves of his legs; so that Mr. Walker rivalled any modern professor of dancing in the creation of new cuts, flings, *pirouettes*, and capers.

"Now, Sir," cried Mr. Siffkin, relinquishing his task through absolute fatigue, "I'll just advise you to mind how you go and tell people that I was jilted by Mrs. Weston again. May I lose the whitest of my front teeth, if I don't have at you again, if you do!"

"And I, Sir, will pull you up before the Police before you are a week older," cried Mr. Walker.

"I've done it, Scuttle—I've polished him off," exclaimed Mr. Nassau Siffkin, running up to his friend who hove in sight at this crisis.

"So much the better," shouted Mr. Scuttle, panting for breath. "But I hope you will not go and do as I did, when I horse-whipped a fellow as he deserved."

"What was that?" enquired Mr. Siffkin.

"Why," returned Mr. Scuttle, "I brought an action against myself for the assault, and never found out my error till I was going to issue a writ against my own person for the damages."

"Extraordinary!" ejaculated Mr. Nassau Siffkin. "But now that I have conducted myself like a gentleman, and taken the satisfaction *of* a gentleman," continued Mr. Siffkin, with vast emphasis upon the preposition, "let us return to my hotel and discuss a glass of Tyler's best Margaux."

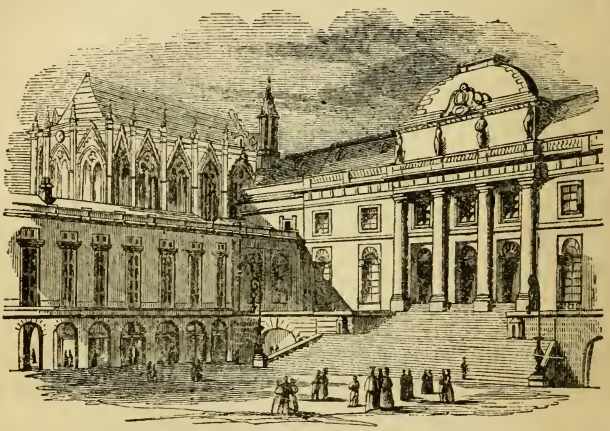
And, as the dramatic author would say, *exeunt* Messieurs Scuttle and Siffkin on one side, and Messieurs Walker and Chitty on the other.

But Mr. Walker was as good as his word; for on the following day Mr. Nassau Siffkin received a summons to appear before the Sixth Chamber of Correctional Police to answer to the action which was brought against him for the assault.

On the morning when the trial was to take place, Messieurs Tupman and Winkle having declined to be present at it, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass jumped into a cabriolet, and ordered the driver to take them to the Palais de Justice, as their curiosity in the matter was more acute than that of their companions. To the Palais de Justice Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass were accordingly conducted; and on their arrival at the front entrance, they stood for some time to

admire the magnificent building, with its fine flights of steps, its lofty chapel, and its imposing appearance. Mr. Pickwick then managed, in very bad French, to inform the driver of the cabriolet that he should probably be detained an hour or so in the Palace of Justice, and he accompanied his maudlin suggestion with the more comprehensive argument of a franc, which he desired the cabman to disburse in liquor at the nearest public-house or wine-shop till his return.

"Magnificent flight of steps," said Mr. Pickwick, as he broke his shin in tripping against one of them.



"So wide and convenient," said Mr. Snodgrass, running against a Gendarme as he turned to make his observations to Mr. Pickwick.

"And I have understood," continued the learned man, "that it was in the square upon which this building looks that criminals were formerly guillotined."

Mr. Snodgrass shuddered as Mr. Pickwick informed him of this very important fact just as they attained the vast quadrangle from which the various Courts open in a manner somewhat similar to, though a thousand times more magnificent than, the arrangements of Westminster Hall. This immense quadrangle is called the Hall of Lost Steps, or *Salle des Pas Perdus*, and by its title admirably illustrates the uselessness of wasting one's time and money in law. With a considerable degree of difficulty, the two gentlemen discovered the identical Chamber in which the cause of "Walker *versus* Siffkin" was to be adjudicated.

At length the case was called; and as Mr. Siffkin was not forthcoming, it lasted but a short time, no defence being made to the action. Three quarters of an hour were sufficient to decide the matter: the witnesses were severally called and examined—the plaintiff's counsel made a long and able speech, to which Mr. Pickwick listened with his eyes shut, and Mr. Snodgrass with his mouth open—and the sentence of the Court condemned Mr. Siffkin to two years' imprisonment, five hundred francs fine, and the payment of all costs.

It may be as well to mention here, that on the following morning there appeared in *Galignani's Messenger* a letter from Mr. Siffkin stating that he (Mr. Siffkin) had deemed it prudent to leave the country, as no English gentleman could think of expiating a fault of which he had been guilty, in a French prison—that he begged a suspension of all public opinion till he should be enabled to publish his case in the *Times* newspaper—and that Mr. Hook Walker was a very great rogue and scoundrel indeed. It may also be as well to add, that Mr. Siffkin never did publish a full statement; and that if public opinion ever had been suspended, for a moment, it would be suspended still.

Mr. Hook Walker, having been congratulated upon his success by all his friends, retired in company with some of them to the adjacent Café, where he drank to his own health in so many glasses that he stood a very good chance of ruining that which he so frequently pledged, and where he and his companions, amongst whom were Mr. Lipman and Mr. Jopling, made so much noise that they were heard a quarter of a mile off. In the mean time Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass hastened to the place where they had left the cab; but on their arrival in the square, no vehicle was to be seen. And this may very easily be accounted for; inasmuch as the horse, finding himself suddenly left *to* himself, indulged in a pleasant little trot after a wain of hay which passed, and which enticed the poor beast, cab and all, into an adjacent street, where the wain stopped, and so did the animal.

"This is very curious," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Very," assented Mr. Snodgrass. "But, perhaps, the cabman couldn't wait any longer."

"Then he would have asked us for his fare before we left him," suggested Mr. Pickwick.

"Ah! I forgot that," exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass: "so he would."

"We had better take another cab," said Mr. Pickwick.

"That's what I think," said Mr. Snodgrass; and the two gentlemen were looking about for a cab-stand, when the driver of the runaway vehicle issued from a wine-shop close by.

The cabman gazed around him in despair, so soon as he missed his vehicle; and it immediately struck him that he was the victim of a conspiracy to rob him of it. He therefore reflected upon the best means to adopt; and having persuaded himself that no two men he had ever yet seen resembled a couple of swindlers more than our hero and his friend, he forthwith stated his complaint to a police-officer near, and in a couple of seconds, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass were marched off to the nearest guard-house, with as little ceremony as they had ever experienced in their whole lives. Vain was it that Mr. Pickwick attempted to address the crowd: equally vain was it for Mr. Snodgrass to threaten the police in good vernacular English with the vengeance of the law; the cabman told his tale—the affair seemed suspicious—the crowd declared that "thief" instead of "philanthropy" was marked in very legible characters upon Mr. Pickwick's face; so away they went from the guard-house to the office of the nearest Commissary of Police.

Destiny had willed it that another Englishman, charged with robbery, was at that precise moment undergoing an examination before the Piratical Commissary to whose office Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snod-

grass were conducted; and it happened that in the course of the proceedings Mr. Pickwick was enabled to speak to his guilty fellow-countryman, whom he began to console, and to whom he offered a good deal of advice relative to the firmness with which a man ought to bear his misfortunes.

"Misfortune, do you mean!" cried the accused, with an indignant glance at Mr. Pickwick's small-clothes: "I call it a blessed thing when a man can rob himself up in the world."

"Do you pretend to say, my good man," demanded Mr. Pickwick, with a stern expression of countenance, "that you are not ashamed of the predicament in which you are placed?"

"No more for robbing my master than you are for stealing a cab," returned the man.

"I cannot understand you," said Mr. Pickwick; "and in reference to myself, I shall soon prove my innocence of this disgraceful deed with which I am charged."

"Over the left, I suppose—eh, old fellow?" returned the accused Englishman. "Blow me if you wear them tights and gaiters for nothing!"

"What *do* you mean, my good man?" asked Mr. Pickwick, quite bewildered by these mysterious allusions.

"Mean!" said the man, "why, that them small-clothes o' your'n is a capital dodge. With such a westure as that, one may swindle to any extent. Blest if it ain't the best gag I ever see."

"Do you really take me for a thief, then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, in the deepest indignation.

"Do I?" echoed the man: "do I? Yes—and a devilish clever one into the bargain. Curse me if I don't respect you the more I hear you talk. Where did you study, I say, old fellow?"

Mr. Pickwick was about to reply that he had been educated at a highly-respectable Grammar-school in the neighbourhood of London: but his doubts were again excited by the other's suddenly asking him "whether he generally practised as a magsman, or whether he didn't think conveyancing the best trade going?"

Mr. Pickwick shook his head, and then glanced impatiently round the room. The Commissary was busy writing, and paid no attention at the moment to either case.

"I tell you what it is, old fellow," resumed the Englishman, whose manners and conversation were so peculiar; "I see you don't think I'm fly—but I assure you that I'm as down as the knocker at Newgate. Why, Sir—you may trust me when I tell you that I've already robbed myself into two deuced good sitivations, and am now trying it on again. Depend upon it I'll rob myself up in the world yet, before I've done."

"Really, you must excuse me," said Mr. Pickwick; "but if you be so thoroughly depraved as you would wish to appear, I—"

"Nonsense!" interrupted the man; "we understand it, old fellow, although I dare say we shall both swing at last. But never say 'Die' till I'm dead. Only fancy—the first master I robbed, begged me off punishment, declared that I was penitent, and took me into his service as his confidential clerk. Masters, when you rob them, always do that, if you only happen to be young. Well, I robbed him a second

time, and he declared he couldn't keep me. But he said 'he wouldn't ruin the poor boy;' and so he recommended me to an intimate friend of his—a merchant—and gave me a splendid character, with just a hint that I was 'a little wild or so; but that he'd no doubt I should turn out well if kept to business.' This was capital: I soon wormed myself into the confidence of my new master, and then began a little system of filching which lasted upwards of seven months. I was only found out just now; but you see I am gradually robbing myself up in the world."

"And you will rob yourself up higher and higher, till you get to the gallows," said Mr. Pickwick, in his most impressive tone of voice; whereat the rogue laughed heartily, and again addressed the great man, who thus deigned to converse with him, in a strain of language which was too ambiguous for Mr. Pickwick's comprehension.

"Does he really suspect us to be thieves, then?" enquired Mr. Snodgrass of his great leader, in the utmost perturbation and dismay at the bare idea of such a supposition.

"In course I do," said the thief.

Mr. Snodgrass would have used his eloquence in defence of his character, had not the examination of the accused been at that moment resumed. The result was that the prisoner found to his cost that his fortunes had taken a sudden change, and that he was now robbing himself *down* in the world; for he was committed to a low dungeon in the prison of the Conciergerie till the Juge d'Instruction should be prepared to attend to his case. As he left the office, he tipped a knowing wink to Mr. Snodgrass, and considerately advised the astonished Mr. Pickwick "to mind his eye, and swear like bricks that he hadn't stolen the cab."

"They can't prove the conspiracy, old fellow," added the prisoner; "your confederates manage the matter a devilish sight too well for that."

He then expressed his conviction that Mr. Pickwick was "the regular dustman," and that Mr. Snodgrass was "a knowing cove;" and having given additional force to his opinions by the super-addition of a large quantity of oaths and imprecations, he was led out of the office by the Gendarmes.

Suspicions were very strong against Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass, in consequence of the circumstance of the former gentleman having bestowed a franc upon the cabman, evidently, as the Commissary at first thought, to keep that individual out of the way by providing him with the means to indulge himself in drink at the wine-shop. But the matter was very speedily cleared up by the arrival of a messenger who stated that the cabriolet had been found in an adjacent street, and that the driver of a waggon would prove, if necessary, that it had not been stolen. The case was therefore dismissed; and Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Snodgrass, having satisfied all present that they were highly respectable individuals, and any thing but thieves, retired amidst the respectful bows of those in whose custody they had been a few minutes before.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A MOST INTERESTING CHAPTER, IN WHICH CERTAIN PARTICULARS AND DISCOURSES, WHICH IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETAIL AT THE HEAD, ARE VERY PROPERLY AND LUCIDLY PRESENTED TO THE READER.

THE reader has yet to be informed of the motives which induced Mr. Snodgrass to visit France. He received a letter from his respected and venerable friend, Mr. Pickwick, in which that gentleman's intentions relative to Mrs. Weston were duly mentioned, and which terminated with an invitation to be present at the wedding. The eventful day had been fixed; and we now bring our readers to it, specifying at the same time, for the behoof of posterity, that it was the Fourth of October, 1835.

We said that we should introduce our readers to this day, or the day to them—it matters but little. Suffice it to say, that in imitation of other days, this one dawned, and that it was ushered in big with the fate of Pickwick and of Weston!

"What sort of a morning is it, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, as that gentleman entered his master's apartment, at an earlier hour than usual.

"Rayther foggy, Sir," was the reply; "but good enough for the purpose, I des say, as the gen'leman observed ven he took the blunderbuss to blow his brains out vith. How d'ye feel yourself this mornin', Sir?"

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, mysteriously beckoning his servant to draw near the bed.

"Vell, Sir," said Mr. Weller; "you ain't a-goin' for to funk now, and make a hobject o' yourself for all your friends to pint at, air you?" enquired the faithful domestic.

"Tell me, Sam," continued Mr. Pickwick, speaking in a low tone of voice; "how did you feel the day you were married?"

"Vy, preshus qveer, Sir," answered Mr. Weller; "cos I'd drunk such a nation lot o' Ginness's stout to keep my sperets up, that I'm blessed if I knew vether I vos standin' on my head or my heels. A wery excitin' day it is vith us all, Sir, as the thief said ven he vos goin' to be hung."

"Well, I think it is, Sam," observed Mr. Pickwick. "Has the tailor sent home my new clothes?"

"Tights, veskitt, coat, gaiters, and all," returned Mr. Weller, pointing to a chair on which the articles he had just enumerated, lay; "an' a new tile a-hangin' on the peg outside o' the door. Do you know, Sir, vot the gen'leman said to t'other gen'leman as threatened to give him a good volloping for cheatin' at cards?"

"No: what did he say, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"'I say my wery partickler and independent frend,' says von gen'leman to t'other, I'll jist give you a good dressin', I vill,'—'And wery much obleeged I shall be if you do,' says t'other, 'cos I'm blow'd if my tailor vill.'—That's the story, Sir," added Mr. Weller

"A very clever retort, too, Sam," remarked Mr. Pickwick. "But to return to the subject of marriage, Sam. What did you do the first thing in the morning of your wedding-day?"

"Had a pint o' half-an'-half, Sir," was the very candid reply; "an' then I eat two pounds o' cold weal-pie for breakfast. I could'nt drink water on that there mornin', cos it's nerwous. Bohay don't agree vith von on them kind o' days: so I valked into the bottled porter. Ven nerves is bad, malt drinks is good."

"Is that a fact, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick. "I have a very great mind to try a glass of something to compose myself."

"A glass o' beer, or a go o' summot short, ain't no bad thing on these oc-casions," returned Mr. Weller. "But you must mind an' look wery doleful ven Bishop Luscombe goes for to pro-nounce the blessin' at the Hambassador's Chapel. It ain't respectful to be grinnin' avay like clock-vork. The wisage ought to ac-cord vith the ceremony, as the clown said at the theaytre ven they asked him to perform Hamlet."

"And as you went to church, Sam," pursued Mr. Pickwick, "how did you behave to your intended?"

"Vy, Sir," was the immediate answer, "I couldn't wery vell kiss her afore the t' other people, so I jist squeezed her elber, an' vhispered in her ear that she vos as pretty as a pocket Wenus. Then as ve passed a shop, I made her look in at the vinder and choose summot for herself. I think a squeeze round the vaist is as good as any thing else. Vimen likes little attentions, as the vatchman said ven he handed the nobleman's vife a flask o' brandy."

"I think I shall profit by your advice, now," said Mr. Pickwick; as he merged with exceeding ease and elasticity from his bed.

In half an hour the great man had completed his toilet; and when ne entered the dining-room he was forthwith congratulated by his three friends, whose felicitations were delivered in such a strain of simultaneous enthusiasm that Mr. Pickwick did not understand one word that was uttered by either.

Presently the front-door bell rang, and Mr. Kallaway made his appearance. In another quarter of an hour, a loud peal announced Mr. Septimus Chitty; and shortly afterwards Mr. Hook Walker, between whom and Mr. Scuttle peace had been re-instated, was ushered into the presence of him whom he came to honour.

"It is a part of my system to be early on such occasions," said Mr. Walker, as he glanced towards the breakfast-table.

"My father-in-law was always the first to feed the pigs in the morning," remarked Mr. Kallaway. "Why—what do you think Tom Smith said one afternoon when the vicar had been out coursing all day on Sunday and thought it was Saturday?"

"Has any one written a poem upon the occasion?" enquired Mr. Chitty of Mr. Pickwick.

"A poem, did you say, Sir?" ejaculated Mr. Snodgrass; and leading Mr. Chitty to the window, he commenced a long conversation with that gentleman upon the art of poesy.

"He said that a man who'd got up early and fed his own pigs," continued Mr. Kallaway, "was an ornament to his country. So I think he is; for what should we do without good pork? What would become of us without sausages?"

"What, indeed?" murmured Mr. Hook Walker, as he helped himself to a large specimen of this last-mentioned article of food; "or without muffins?" added the systematic gentleman, when Mr. Weller placed a quantity of them upon the table.

"Poetry," said Mr. Snodgrass to Mr. Chitty, "poetry, my dear Sir, is as necessary to existence as olives are to port-wine, or currant-jelly to venison."

"Excellent idea," exclaimed Mr. Chitty. "Will there be any venison to-day at dinner—*apud prandium?*"

"I think so," replied Mr. Snodgrass. "But what kind of verse do you prefer?"

"Any kind, my dear Sir," elucidated Mr. Septimus Chitty. "The fact is that those for whom I write generally point out the measure. Rowland, Warren, Doudney, and those fellows, like the long running measure of twelve or fourteen syllables, because they get a good deal of matter into a short advertisement. Now, you see, Milton had none of these shackles; *liber fuit*—he was free to act as he chose. But as I am remunerated according to the number of lines, I lose by this fashion of verse. So that I am always poor; and as I live upon credit, when I do settle, I am always obliged to pay *per nasum*."

"How?" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass.

"*Per nasum*—through the nose," explained Mr. Septimus Chitty, speaking in a most mysterious whisper.

"Oh! I understand," cried Mr. Snodgrass.

"You haven't any loose money about you?" enquired Mr. Chitty; "for the fact is, I have a bill to pay to-morrow, and I am devilish hard run—*durus cursus*."

"Oh!" said Mr. Snodgrass; "if a thousand francs, or so, would do you any good—"

"*Ullum bonum?*" exclaimed Mr. Chitty: "certainly they will."

So Mr. Snodgrass handed over a thousand francs to Mr. Chitty, which Mr. Chitty conveyed to his pocket; and Mr. Snodgrass felt very much pleased at having aided a poet who had actually published so many effusions.

"Now do you know how they cure pork in the English style?" demanded Mr. Kallaway of Mr. Pickwick.

"Had you much game on your farm?" enquired Mr. Winkle of Mr. Kallaway.

"You haven't got another muffin, have you?" demanded Mr. Walker of Mr. Samuel Weller.

"Poetry is the balm of existence—the very essence of love," observed Mr. Snodgrass to Mr. Chitty.

"A breakfast ain't a bad thing, though," returned that gentleman; and he was about to add that he had not eaten of one for the previous three mornings, but the entrance of Mr. Weller and a cold ham stopped his mouth till he opened it to admit some of the latter article.

"Who cured this ham?" demanded Mr. Kallaway.

"It ain't been ill, that I know of," replied Mr. Weller; "but if you vant wery partickler to know, I'll jist step round to our grocer and ask vot medical man he paytronizes."

"Now then to breakfast!" cried Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Walker having

as yet alone commenced an attack upon the viands: "and then we must be off to Scuttle's."

"Notice in *Galignani* this mornin'," said Mr. Weller, drawing a paper from his pocket; and without any farther preface, he read the following extract: "Ve understand that Mr. Samivel Pickvick, the celebrated traveller and antikvarian, is about to lead to the himmyneal haltar the lovely vidder, Mrs. Sophia Veston, niece of Mr. Jeremiah Scuttle, who has so long been a distinguished resident in Paris.'—Vell, that ain't nothin', I don't think, as the doctor said ven the gen'leman womited the kitchen poker."

Mr. Weller was interrupted by a violent ring at the front-door bell; and, having disappeared for a moment, he returned, escorting into the breakfast room Mr. Lipman and Mr. Jopling.

"Well, how are you, my tulip?" said Mr. Lipman, slapping Mr. Pickwick so violently upon the back, that our hero's spectacles fell off into his plate.

"Yes—how are you, old fellow?" demanded Mr. Jopling, inflicting another blow upon Mr. Pickwick's shoulders, probably with a view of ascertaining if it were not possible to push his head into the plate to pick up the spectacles.

"We told you we'd come again, old file," politely remarked Mr. Lipman, as he drew a chair to the table.

"I should think we've kept our words, too," added Mr. Jopling, imitating his friend's example in respect to the chair.

"Come now—introduce us, old fellow," whispered Mr. Lipman, as he glanced towards Mr. Snodgrass, Mr. Kallaway, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Chitty.

An introduction was accordingly effected as desired.

"Very glad to see you, Snodgrass," said Mr. Lipman, extending his hand to that gentleman across the table.

"So am I, Kallaway," observed Mr. Jopling.

"Pass the toast, Walker," cried Mr. Lipman.

"Fork me over that roll, old fellow," said Mr. Jopling, addressing himself to Mr. Chitty.

"You won't take any ham, will you, Jopling?" facetiously remarked Mr. Lipman, helping himself to about a pound and a half of that edible.

"Nor you any cold pie?" retorted Mr. Jopling, filling his plate from the dish before him.

"We saw the notice in *Galignani* this morning," observed Mr. Lipman to Mr. Pickwick.

"As we supposed there would be a spree going on, we thought we'd come," added Mr. Jopling. "We knew we should be welcome."

He might have said that he knew he could behave as if he were welcome, and that instead of a "spree" there would be a breakfast, of which both he and Mr. Lipman stood in very great need, it being generally recommended by the faculty to imbibe a meal at least once in eight-and-forty hours, and the two gentlemen upon this occasion having imprudently suffered about fifty-six to pass over their heads without consulting the cravings of their appetites.

"Wery good leg o' mutton in the house, and a piece o' biled pork," said Mr. Weller to Mr. Lipman, with an ironical smile.

"So much the better, Sam," cried Mr. Jopling, who did not perceive the satire which Mr. Pickwick's faithful servant intended to convey by his observation.

And when the joints alluded to made their appearance, Messieurs Lipman and Jopling, who resembled a recruiting company in a small country town, commenced an awful attack upon them.

The breakfast lasted till about twelve o'clock; and at that hour a series of hackney-coaches was brought up to the door, and the whole party proceeded to the lodgings occupied by Mr. Scuttle and Mrs. Weston. Mr. Weller was seated upon the dickey of that vehicle in which the four great travellers were ensconced; and as the cavalcade passed up the Boulevards, the facetious domestic waved his hat joyously over his head, and performed several other antics to the great delight of all who beheld him.

At length the party arrived at Mr. Scuttle's abode, and found that gentleman in his best clothes and an excellent humour. It is true that when he was attiring himself in the morning, he had slipped his legs into the sleeves of his coat, and his arms into his drawers; and that he did not detect his error till he looked at himself in the glass to see if his toilet were complete; but this little recurrence of his old malady had not ruffled his temper: and he received his intended nephew and the large party of gentlemen who followed in the rear, with the utmost urbanity and kindness.

"I've got some news to tell you, Scuttle," said Mr. Kallaway, when they were all seated.

"Ah! what's that?" enquired the absent gentleman.

"The black cat had kittens last night," replied Mr. Kallaway.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Scuttle.

"But that's not all," continued Mr. Kallaway. "When I returned home,—it was very late,—my big dog mistook me for a thief, and bit his name in the calf of my leg."

"God bless me!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick: "but are you not afraid of hydrophobia?"

"Oh! no—not in the least," replied the ex-farmer and grazier: "the dog drank up all the milk this morning, and therefore I have but little fear of becoming mad."

"Devilish good argument, that—is it not, Jopling?" cried Mr. Lipman.

"Capital," assented the individual thus appealed to.

"I like that dog of your's, Kallaway, very much," observed Mr. Winkle.

"A dog is the most poetical of all animals," said Mr. Snodgrass. "No rural or domestic poem is worth a fig unless you describe the barking of a dog heard at a distance."

"Nor is an elegy worth speaking of, if you don't put an owl up in the ivy bushes," remarked Mr. Chitty. "Owls and dogs are as necessary in poetry as rivals and thwarted lovers are in novels. In each department of literature they are all the go—*omnis eo*."

"It's a very bad system," said Mr. Hook Walker.

"I wonder whether Mrs. Weston means to keep us waiting much longer," whispered Mr. Tupman to Mr. Kallaway.

It appears that Mr. Pickwick wondered the very same thing; for he

reminded Mr. Scuttle that the hour was already past at which the bishop had promised to be in attendance at the Ambassador's chapel. Mr. Scuttle then, for the first time, recollected that he had not seen his niece since breakfast; he accordingly summoned a female domestic and despatched her to Mrs. Weston's apartment with a message to intimate that the bridegroom and his friends were waiting.

And be it also remarked that the bride's friends were also waiting in an adjacent chamber. There were the two Misses Chizzlewizzle—young ladies of five-and-forty and seven-and-forty respectively; Mrs. Colonel Sutcliffe; Lady Ptolemy Binks; the Honourable Mrs. and the five Misses Dashwood Pooke; and a pleasing variety of cousins of all ages. And when they had felicitated, or pretended to felicitate each other upon the eligible match their friend or relative (as the case might be) was about to make, they divided themselves into little groups, and began privately to discuss the merit of that connexion which they had publicly so much extolled.

"Well, I never!" whispered Lady Ptolemy Binks to the Honourable Mrs. Dashwood Pooke.

"Did you ever?" added the last-named lady in the same *sotto voce*.

"What next?" demanded her ladyship with a most mysterious shake of the head.

"After this I shall be surprised at nothing," observed Mrs. Pooke, pursing up her mouth.

"I'm sure people are all going mad now-a-days," was the conviction expressed by Lady Binks.

"Or else they never could make such fools of themselves," said Mrs. Pooke.

And having thus made up their minds that Mr. Pickwick and Mrs. Weston were certainly out of their own, the two ladies turned their attention to the discussion of the last fashions.

"What do you think of this match, dear?" enquired Mrs. Colonel Sutcliffe, of one of the Misses Chizzlewizzle.

"Why—between ourselves," answered Miss Chizzlewizzle, "I'm thoroughly disgusted."

"Exactly what I said to the Colonel this morning, my dear," returned Mrs. Sutcliffe. "For my part, I really don't know what people can be about!"

"Is it not preposterous?" demanded Miss Chizzlewizzle, with an air of the most unmitigated contempt.

"Worse—worse!" rejoined Mrs. Sutcliffe, with a mysterious shake of the head: "absolutely indecent—at his age!"

"That's the worst of living in Paris," observed Miss Chizzlewizzle, who had resided there since the peace; "the English abroad are such a queer set!"

"You are right, dear," assented Mrs. Sutcliffe, who had herself been domiciled in the French metropolis for the ten previous years, and whose honesty at cards was, to say the least, problematical.

"What a regular mull that affair was the night before last," said Miss Chizzlewizzle, alluding to some ball at which she and Mrs. Sutcliffe had been present.

"I think you did not dance, dear?" whispered the Colonel's spouse.

"Not I, indeed," replied Miss Chizzlewizzle: no one had asked her.

"Oh! it is all very well, now and then," remarked Mrs. Sutcliffe, who had waltzed with one German count and two Italian marquises, and danced a quadrille with a Belgian General.

"I wonder what *can* make her so long dressing," said Miss Chizzlewizzle, whom the reminiscences of the neglect she had experienced at the ball, had deprived of all the little good humour she had brought with her to Mrs. Weston's abode.

In the mean time, it having been proposed by Mr. Scuttle that the gentlemen should join the ladies who had been invited to attend the ceremony and partake of the bridal dinner in the evening, a tumultuous rush of males from the adjacent apartment put an end to the very interesting conversation which was going on amongst the female portion of the visitors. But time wore away, and still Mrs. Weston did not make her appearance. Mr. Pickwick grew impatient, and Mr. Scuttle uneasy; and at length the house-maid announced that the lady's-maid was no where to be found. Mr. Scuttle intimated that she was with her mistress: but upon further enquiry, it was also ascertained that Mrs. Weston herself had disappeared.

Swift as an arrow shot from a bow by the hand of a stalworth archer—or fleet as the fall of a quarrelsome gentleman, when his friends pitch him out of the window—did Mr. Scuttle descend the stairs and hasten to the porter's lodge to question him relative to the movements of his niece. After a great deal of hesitation—for the porter's eyes had been closed by the weight of two five-franc pieces which had been administered, and could only be opened on a counter-irritating principle of applying a double allowance to the palms of his hands—the Cerberus intimated to Mr. Scuttle that Mrs. Weston and the lady's-maid had departed in a hackney-coach about two hours previously, and that a gentleman with black whiskers met them at the door and accompanied them.

Mr. Scuttle applied his hand to his head, to ascertain if he were standing upon that part of his body or upon his heels; and having satisfied himself as to the nature of his position, he rushed out of the porter's lodge as fast as his fat legs could carry him, and pitched himself head-foremost into the nearest cabriolet.

"English Ambassador's—drive like fury," said Mr. Scuttle to the cab-man.

And if the simile be a correct one, then certainly fury was properly imitated by the speed with which the horse tore along the ground. In six minutes the animal stood panting at the gate of the English Ambassador's Hotel.

Mr. Scuttle leaped from the vehicle like a chestnut bounding from the hob, and propelled himself into the hotel, through the hall, and up the passage to the right hand, and stopped at the door of the chapel to recover breath. He then walked leisurely into the sacred building, where he found the clerk occupied in closing registers, adjusting stools, and preparing to roll up the Bishop's surplice.

"What has taken place here to-day?" demanded Mr. Scuttle.

"A marriage," was the clerk's laconic reply.

"Between whom?" said Mr. Scuttle, panting for the means of respiration.

The clerk gave no answer, but opened the register, and pointed to the last entry which had been made in it. Mr. Scuttle darted his glance with lightning force at the register, as if he intended to scorch it to a cinder: but as the ink was scarcely yet dry, it did not take a light; and so Mr. Scuttle was enabled to peruse the following words:—

"I hereby certify that Nassau Siffkin, of the Parish of Saint George, Hanover Square, London, Bachelor, and Sophia Weston, of the Parish of Saint James, Piccadilly, in the county of Middlesex, Widow, were married in the house of his Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, according to the United Church of England and Ireland, &c. &c.

(Signed) "M. H. LUSCOMBE, BISHOP,
"AND CHAPLAIN TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY."

Mr. Scuttle could scarcely believe his eyes as he perused the fatal entry: he therefore read it a second time to convince himself of its truth. The clerk gazed upon him with astonishment, but said nothing.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Mr. Scuttle. "Where could Siffkin have been living? And how did he dare return to Paris after the sentence given against him?"

"I heard the gentleman say as how that he'd only come yesterday afternoon," said the clerk; "and the moment the ceremony was over, he and his wife, with the lady's-maid, jumped into a post-chaise-and-six, which they got me to procure for them all ready, and were off like bricks."

"She could scarcely have done this in a fit of absence of mind," mused Mr. Scuttle, within himself, as he slowly issued from the chapel, and regained the cabriolet that was waiting for him. "But what the deuce can I say to Pickwick?"

Mr. Scuttle now desired the driver to proceed as slowly as he chose, in order that he (Mr. Scuttle) might have as much time as possible to reflect upon the impression the conduct of his niece was likely to make upon Mr. Pickwick and the numerous guests assembled to witness the marriage. There remained but one alternative—and that was to tell the truth.

Mr. Scuttle was anxiously awaited by all those whom he had left behind; and as he re-entered the apartment, a solemn silence indicated the impatience with which his return had been looked for.

"Mr. Pickwick," said Mr. Scuttle, moving slowly into the centre of the circle which was speedily formed around him; "we are all deceived—and you are—"

"What?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"Jilted!" returned Mr. Scuttle: "she has married Siffkin."

"Siffkin!" exclaimed Mr. Hook Walker; and without waiting to make any further enquiries, he rushed out of the room to get his warrant executed against Mr. Nassau Siffkin.

In the mean time Mr. Pickwick put on his gloves with a very serious countenance, shook hands with Mr. Scuttle, bowed to the remainder of the company, and retired, without uttering another word, followed by Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Winkle.

Mr. Scuttle then related the particulars of the marriage, so far as he was acquainted with them.

"Poor Mr. Pickwick!" said Mrs. Dashwood Pooke to Lady Ptolemy Binks: "it would have been such an excellent match!"

"The best that either of them could have made," returned her ladyship.

"Eligible in all respects," continued Mrs. Dashwood Pooke.

"I always said so," observed Lady Binks.

"And I'm sure I always thought so," added the Honourable Mrs. Dashwood Pooke.

"Only people never will take advice," said Lady Ptolemy Binks.

"I always impressed upon Mrs. Weston's mind the propriety of marrying Mr. Pickwick," remarked Mrs. Pooke.

"It was only just now that we were talking about it," cried Lady Binks.

So indeed it was: but the two ladies seemed to have entirely forgotten their primary remarks. However, this versatility of opinion, which invariably accommodates itself to circumstances, or even to the spite and wishes of the world, is exceedingly common in fashionable life.

"Here's a pretty to-do," whispered Mrs. Colonel Sutcliffe to Miss Chizzlewizzle.

"Disgraceful!" exclaimed that young lady, with prodigious emphasis upon the first syllable.

"I never heard of such a thing," said Mrs. Sutcliffe.

"To throw herself away upon that fellow Siffkin," cried Miss Chizzlewizzle.

"When she had secured old Pickwick too!" added Mrs. Colonel Sutcliffe.

"I never can see her again, after this!" continued Miss Chizzlewizzle.

"Oh! nor I, indeed!" said Mrs. Sutcliffe.

"Well—*factum pro*—it's all done for," observed Mr. Chitty to Mr. Kallaway, in another part of the room; for the whole company had divided itself into groups to discuss the recent event.

"I don't know that it is so bad for Pickwick, after all," returned Mr. Kallaway. "The match was unequal; and I recollect when William Fisher was engaged to marry old Dawson's girl, the man said to me—"

"As for the wedding," returned Mr. Septimus Chitty, "I don't care *ficum*—a fig for that: it is the dinner," he added, in a scarcely audible whisper, "which I should not like to prove a failure—*nullus co*—no go."

"Precious queer start, this," said Mr. Lipman to Mr. Jopling.

"I wonder whether there'll be any grub going on here presently," remarked Mr. Jopling: "if not, we'd better go and console old Pickwick."

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE VISIT OF MR. TRACY TUPMAN TO A VERY EXTRAORDINARY PROFESSIONAL GENTLEMAN.—AN ODD ENCOUNTER BROUGHT ABOUT IN A VERY ODD MANNER.—MR. TUPMAN'S HEART MELTED BY LOVELY WOMAN'S TEARS.

In the meantime, Mr. Pickwick and his three friends, attended by Mr. Weller, had returned home. Not a syllable had been uttered by either during their progress from the Rue Taitbout to the Rue Royale; and when they were once more in their own lodgings, the moment was anxiously awaited for Mr. Pickwick to untie his own tongue and those of his followers by the utterance of some remark that might originate a general conversation. That moment—a moment so anxiously looked for—arrived: the great man laid aside his hat and gloves, and then spoke as follows:—

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Sir," cried Mr. Weller.

"Lunch," returned Mr. Pickwick; "and bring up a bottle of our best Madeira."

"Di-rectly, Sir," said Mr. Weller, rejoiced to perceive that his revered master meditated a meal instead of a murder upon himself.

"My dear friends," began Mr. Pickwick, when Mr. Weller had left the room, "I am not sorry for the turn which the events of this morning have taken. I was about to commit a folly—a most egregious folly, I may say—"

"No—no!" interrupted both Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle; while a very dubious sound, something between a grunt and a short cough, emanated from the lips, or rather the throat, of Mr. Tupman.

"Yes, my dear friends," continued Mr. Pickwick, softened almost to tears; but whether through the ejaculation of Messrs. Winkle and Snodgrass, or on account of the less affecting conduct of Mr. Tupman, does not appear: "I should have lived to repent the match. You see that Mrs. Weston is a versatile character, and easily swayed by the influence of others: she is therefore a weak, though a well-meaning, woman. It is better as it is; and now let us dismiss the subject from our minds."

At this moment Mr. Weller made his appearance with the tray, which contained a variety of good things. These were speedily arranged upon the table, together with the Madeira that Mr. Pickwick had just slightly alluded to.

"Now, gen'lemen, pitch into 'em, as the prize-fighters say," exclaimed Mr. Weller. "I feel wery vell convinced you must be a-hungry arter the excitin' ewents o' the mornin'."

"I have not lost my appetite, for one," said Mr. Pickwick, whose countenance was as good-humoured as if nothing disagreeable had taken place.

"Wery narrer es-cape you've had on it, Sir," observed Mr. Weller;

"wery narrer indeed. Blow'd if I didn't think yesterday that by this time you'd a-been spliced in indissyllable bondage, as they say in fashionable langvidge, cos it's more politer on account o' the hard vords. A wery near go it where, as the minister observed to old George the Third, ven Bonaparte vos a-goin' to inwade England."

"My foolish conduct in reference to that woman," said Mr. Pickwick, "will be the only thing in my life I shall ever have real cause to regret."

"My father, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, "always svore as how a man vos a great idiot if so be he married a vidder. But that there feller, Siffkin, as he calls his-self, vill find out his mistake afore long. He's made a old curiosity of his-self, an' in a year or so ve'll jist see vot he 'd take for his bargain."

"I hope that they will make a happy couple, Sam," said the kind-hearted Mr. Pickwick.

"A friend o' mine, as vos a huxter in Cambervell," returned Mr. Weller, "used to recite these lines venever any von talked to him o' marriage:—

'Till the honey-moon is gone,
Happy does the days glide on.
Ven the honey-moon is over,
Then you doesn't lie in clover.'

I don't know vether he made 'em his-self," added Mr. Weller: "but wery pretty they air."

"Very, indeed, Sam," answered Mr. Pickwick, somewhat abruptly. "But I still maintain that Mrs. Siffkin, as we must now call her, is a very amiable, although a weak, woman."

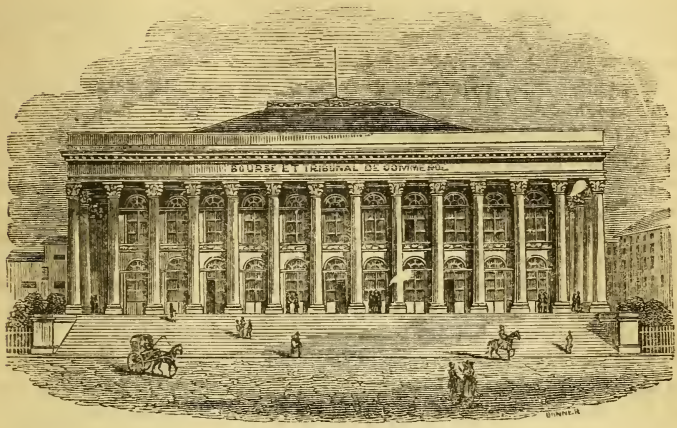
"A amiable 'ooman!" ejaculated Mr. Weller; "so they all is afore marriage. Butter ain't nothin' to the softness o' their dis-positions, nor mild ale to their tempers."

"Let us now drop the subject of my late matrimonial views for ever," said Mr. Pickwick, in an authoritative tone of voice. "The lesson has been a salutary one to me; and I am not too proud to acknowledge that I shall profit by it. At all events, we will drink to the happiness of the bride and the husband of her choice in a glass of Madeira."

The toast was accordingly drunk; and Mr. Tupman, who had sate uneasily on his chair during the previous half-hour, looked at his watch and declared that he had an appointment to which he was compelled to pay immediate attention. He accordingly left his friends to enjoy themselves in each other's society, while he hastened to transact a little private business of his own.

Geographers have thus traced the path pursued by the immortal Tracy Tupman on this occasion. He walked up the right-hand side of the Boulevards till he arrived at the Rue Neuve Saint Augustin, into which he turned; he then walked straight on to the Rue des Filles Saint Thomas, and continued his way till he arrived in the Place de la Bourse, where he halted for a moment to admire the splendid building which forms the Exchange of Paris. This grand structure is an oblong parallelogram, about 250 feet in length, and 160 in breadth.

It presents a perfect peristyle, with Corinthian columns all around, raised upon a basement of ten feet in height. The columns are sixty-



six in number, and form about the building one of the finest piazzas in the world. The room set apart for the business of the Exchange is 125 feet long and 80 broad, and is capable of holding two thousand persons.

For a few minutes did Mr. Tupman stand to survey this magnificent edifice, which he had nevertheless often seen before; and having compared his watch with the clock of the Exchange, he hurried onward towards the Rue Montmartre. When he was convinced that he had arrived in the right street, he cautiously examined the numbers on the gateways of the houses; and then pursued a certain direction to a certain address which he read upon a little card that he every now and then took from his pocket and referred to. During the whole of this extraordinary walk, Mr. Tupman's countenance was animated in the extreme.

At length Mr. Tupman stopped at a certain house, and asked the porter if no less a gentleman than Mr. William Terry, the Matrimonial Advocate, were at home. His question having been understood with some little difficulty, an answer in the affirmative was given: and Mr. Tupman was requested to walk up a few flights of stairs, and he would see Mr. Terry's name upon one of the doors. Every thing, like the prophecy of a fairy in an oriental romance, turned out as the porter had intimated: the door was up the stairs—the name was upon the door—and when the door was opened, it admitted Mr. Tupman, through a little hall, into a large parlour, where sate Mr. William Terry in a cotton dressing-gown and a morocco-leather chair.

"Your most obedient," cried Mr. William Terry, as soon as he espied his visitor.

"Punctual, am I not?" said Mr. Tupman.

"Why—my watch is gone to be mended," returned Mr. Terry ("at the pawnbroker's," he might have added); "and the time-piece in the other room doesn't go:" (it most likely would have gone, and after the watch too, if there had been one).

"Oh! it isn't three yet," said Mr. Tupman, referring to his own repeater. "I left Pickwick and the others at lunch; and so there's no danger of their knowing that I came here."

"Nor have they guessed that we have any communication together, I suppose," added Mr. Terry.

"God forbid!" replied Mr. Tupman. "But, is she—that is, the young lady—come yet?"

"I expect her every moment, Mr. Tupman," was the solemn assurance of the Matrimonial Advocate. "Of course you will not be offended if she brings her confidential lady's-maid with her. Decency, you know, my dear Sir—decency is the order of the day."

"Certainly—oh! certainly," exclaimed Mr. Tupman. "On the contrary—so far from being annoyed at this instance of propriety on the young lady's part, I am excessively pleased with it."

"You recollect the terms, Mr. Tupman?" asked Mr. Terry, fidgeting somewhat in his chair, as he was most likely a very modest man, and detested all considerations of filthy lucre.

"Five *per cent.* upon the fortune, if the match takes place, I think," returned Mr. Tupman.

"And a thousand francs beforehand for my trouble in bringing about the interview," continued Mr. Terry. "I've already received half, you know."

Mr. Tupman's bright imagination instantly comprehended the meaning of this hint; and a note for five hundred francs, being the other moiety due, was immediately tendered to the Matrimonial Advocate, who turned away his head, most likely for the purpose of concealing his blushes, as he received it.

Scarcely was this important little matter adjusted, when a low ring at the front-door bell made Mr. Tupman's heart beat quickly. Mr. Terry himself ran to answer the peal, which was also an appeal; and in a few moments he returned to Mr. Tupman with the gratifying news that the young lady, who had kindly consented to grant him an interview, and to receive him as a partner for life, if in the course of a quarter of an hour or so he should be fortunate enough to please her, was waiting in an adjoining room.

"What sort of a looking person is she?" hastily enquired Mr. Tupman.

"Very handsome, as I have before said," returned Mr. Terry.

"And you are certain that she doesn't know me, even by sight?" demanded Mr. Tupman: "because, if by any accident we did not suit each other—"

"You may safely rely upon my honour," interrupted the Matrimonial Advocate, laying his hand flat upon his left breast.

"That's quite enough," whispered Mr. Tupman: but whether he meant to infer that he had asked a sufficiency of questions, or that he was perfectly satisfied with the asseveration of Mr. Terry, does not appear.

"You must not keep her waiting," suggested Mr. Terry, seeing that Mr. Tupman stood somewhat undecided in the middle of the room.

"It is so very awkward," murmured Mr. Tupman.

"It would be more awkward still to lose a lovely wife and a large fortune," returned Mr. Terry. "A vineyard at Bordeaux—three houses in the Chaussée d'Antin—an estate in Spain—a share in several of the banking-houses in Paris—and she herself connected with the first French families. She moreover speaks English like a native."

These inducements operated like magic upon the sensitive heart of Mr. Tracy Tupman; and having bestowed a squeeze of gratitude upon the hand of Mr. Terry, whose eyes watered at this practical illustration of his client's joy and satisfaction, the gallant Pickwickian opened the door of communication with the next apartment, and hastened into the presence of the young lady and her servant, both of whom were seated, closely veiled, upon the sofa.

When Mr. Tupman entered the room, the young lady, whom he distinguished from the servant by the superiority of her dress, kept her eyes modestly fixed upon the ground; but the moment Mr. Tupman began to stammer out a neat compliment in praise of a beauty he had not yet seen, the young lady started, gave a violent scream, and fell back fainting on the sofa.

"Well," thought Mr. Tupman, as he hurried to her assistance, "my person must be more imposing than ever I suspected it could be. She evidently fancied she was going to meet some old snivelling fellow; and her surprise at seeing such a promising young man as myself *was* enough to overcome her!"

Thus musing, Mr. Tracy Tupman aided the servant to disembarrass the young lady of her bonnet and veil; and when these were laid aside, the young lady partially recovered. But who can depict the rage and astonishment of Mr. Tupman, when he recognised the too well-known features of his once-beloved Anastasie de Volage? The Matrimonial Advocate himself arrived to the succour of the fair one at this juncture; and as he had no camphor nor salts in an ordinary smelling-bottle, he ran to the kitchen and brought a quart-bottle of vinegar, which he immediately applied to her nose. These means were effectual; and in a few minutes the fair Anastasie was recovered.

"Well, Sir, and what have you to say to this?" demanded Mr. Tupman, folding his arms, like Bonaparte and other great men, across his chest, and confronting the Matrimonial Advocate with a stern countenance.

"Really, my dear Sir," began the discomfited Mr. Terry, "I am not aware—"

"The vineyard at Bordeaux and the estate in Spain are like the castles in that latter country, I think," said Mr. Tupman, with an ironical smile which added greatly to the grandeur of his attitude and deportment.

"Upon my word," exclaimed Mr. Terry, "I do not yet understand you."

"Me understand him, vary well," suddenly cried Mademoiselle Anastasie; "me understand him, me assure you."

This was perfectly true, as was demonstrated by the result of the

adventure. Mademoiselle Anastasie requested the Matrimonial Advocate and the female domestic to quit the room and leave her and Mr. Tupman alone together; and when her solicitation was complied with, she turned with a tragic air to Mr. Tupman, and then burst into a very excellent imitation of a flood of tears and a torrent of grief.

At first Mr. Tupman paced the room moodily and sulkily, and said nothing. But the young lady, as she herself had declared, understood him perfectly well; and so she continued crying more furiously than ever. Mr. Tupman's walk up and down the room grew gradually shorter, and at length he stopped altogether: but by some accident he had arrested his movements just opposite the sofa on which Anastasie was weeping.

"Now—now—this is foolish," exclaimed Mr. Tupman, his voice assuming a consolatory tone in spite of himself.

The young lady did not however seem to coincide with the truth of his remark, if her opinion may be tested by the fact that she burst into a still loftier key of grief when Mr. Tupman had done speaking.

"Pray now—don't make this disturbance, my good girl," said Mr. Tupman, after a moment's pause: but the more he attempted to soothe the afflicted Anastasie, the more violent became that fair person's grief. "Well—this is very provoking," mused Mr. Tupman; "I hate to see a woman cry;"—and having uttered these words, he began crying himself.

Mademoiselle Anastasie, finding that she had now reduced the Pickwickian to the point of tenderness which rendered him as malleable to her purpose as red-hot iron in the hands of a skilful artizan, gradually abated the violence of her woe; and in process of time she relapsed into a pleasing little calm.

"Dis vary disagreeable," she at length murmured with only one sob and two sighs: "me always meet you under de unpleasant circumstance."

"You do indeed," responded Mr. Tupman, glancing towards Anastasie's eyes, and wiping his own: "and if I did my duty, I should call in the police and give you all in charge, for this infamous conspiracy to defraud me."

"It no conspiration," cried Mademoiselle Anastasie: "that Monsieur Terré not know dat I ever see you."

Mr. Tupman's reasoning faculties told him that this was certainly true.

"But you need not be under any alarm," said he, after an instant's rumination: "I shall make this Mr. Terry refund me my money, and you may depart in safety. By the bye, how is your friend, the Count Boloski?" enquired Mr. Tupman, with an ironical curl of his expressive mouth.

Mademoiselle Anastasie, perceiving that her safety was in no way compromised with Mr. Tracy Tupman, burst into a violent fit of laughter at this query, and seemed to have entirely forgotten all previous grief in the hilarity of that moment.

"Do you make your turpitude a subject for mirth and merriment?" said Mr. Tupman, in a tone of such severity that it elicited a peal of laughter much louder than ever, from his fair auditor.

The exhilarating shouts were heard in the adjacent apartment; and the Matrimonial Advocate and lady's-maid rushed in to ascertain the cause of the unexpected sounds. But Mr. Tupman cut the matter very short by taking the astonished Mr. Terry aside and speaking to him as follows, while Mademoiselle Anastasie and her domestic made good their retreat with all desirable expedition.

"You do not intend to keep my money, I hope," said Mr. Tupman to the Matrimonial Advocate, "in addition to having thus made a fool of me?"

"I pledge you my word as a gentleman, Sir," returned Mr. Terry, "that I am not conscious of any deceit on my part?"

"And all that flaming account of this young lady's wealth?" demanded Mr. Tupman. "Why—she hasn't got a farthing in the world that's honestly obtained."

Mr. Terry declared that nothing was more likely.

"And as for her character, it is the most infamous in all Paris," continued Mr. Tupman. "She has swindled me two or three times already, and my friends besides. In fact, she has no character."

Mr. Terry intimated that he was not answerable for that.

"And therefore I should thank you to refund the forty pounds I have advanced in this foolish affair," added Mr. Tupman.

Mr. Terry did not absolutely refuse to restore the money to Mr. Tupman: he merely expressed his conviction that Mr. Tupman could only want it "with a hook at the end of it." This mode of settlement was, however, by no means satisfactory, and high words ensued. Mr. Tupman demanded, and Mr. Terry resisted. Mr. Tupman desired to know once for all whether Mr. Terry intended to disgorge the cash; and Mr. Terry on his part was solicitous of ascertaining whether Mr. Tupman "did not wish he might get it." Thus a feud would in all probability have arisen, had not Mr. Tupman, upon the principle that something is better than nothing, proposed a compromise, which was immediately accepted.

"I will allow you to retain half—that is, a five-hundred-franc note." cried Mr. Tupman.

"And you shall pay me my fees into the bargain," urged the Matrimonial Advocate.

"Very well," returned Mr. Tupman, anxious to bring the business to a conclusion.

"Here goes, then," continued Mr. William Terry; and drawing a slip of paper from his pocket, he wrote a short debtor and creditor account with a pencil that emanated from the same *sanctum*. The following is a correct draught of the bill:—

	Francs.
"Receiving your visits upon several occasions, and conferring with you on the choice of a wife.	50
"My servant answering the door to you on three different occasions, when I was not at home.	15
"Correspondence with several ladies on your account, and reading their answers.	50
"Acknowledging the receipt of a brace of pheasants and a hare, which you sent me.	5

	Francs.
"To anxiety of mind relative to your business, and deprivation of sleep occasioned thereby, for seven days, at five francs *per diem*.	35
"As I was walking down the Rue St. Honoré on your business, I was run over by a cab. Doctor's bill, and fees for loss of time during confinement to my bed.	100
"Having dined with you and got drunk at the Café de Paris, I lost the whole of the next day, during which I was obliged to drink continual draughts of Hock and soda-water; for the whole of which I charge.	50
"To time lost in endeavouring to get a wife for you, which I have not been able to do.	50
"Writing a letter to you to ask you for the loan of twenty francs, which you sent me; and for receiving the same, and reading your answer, in which you stated that you had sent the money with the greatest pleasure.	10
"Bringing about an interview with Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, and opening the door to admit you both, with loss of time upon the occasion.	15
"General commission.	20
"Total	400

"I have now," continued Mr. Terry, "to hand you over just one hundred francs. Here they are—I shall not deduct any thing in the shape of commission for having retained the money in my possession; I am not one of those professional men who live upon the good-nature or ignorance of their clients."

"You don't mean to say that your bill amounts to four hundred francs?" enquired Mr. Tupman, in the most unfeigned astonishment.

"If you like to have it taxed, you can," returned Mr Terry; "and I will hold all the money till it has gone through that process."

"Thank you," said Mr. Tupman; "but I do not wish to incur any fresh expenses. I have been most shamefully treated in this affair, and shall not fail to expose the transaction."

"No, you won't, old boy," cried Mr. Terry, manifesting great indifference to this menace.

"And why not?" demanded Mr. Tupman: "why should I not expose a rogue and his associates?"

"Shame, my dear friend—shame," rejoined Mr. Terry: "you would suffer more than us all by giving publicity to the affair. In these cases, *that* is my pull."

"Your what?" indignantly ejaculated Mr. Tupman.

"My pull—or my safeguard, if you like it better," was the reply.

Mr. Tupman perceived that further contention would be useless; he therefore consigned the remnant of his thousand francs to his pocket, and departed with a face considerably increased in its longitudinal proportions by the afternoon's adventure.

But Mr. William Terry, who had made out a bill which would not have disgraced the sharp practice of any of the unprincipled solicitors in London, lived happily for the next two months upon the produce of

the business. What he did, when his nine hundred francs were gone, the Editor of these Memoirs has never ascertained: but in all probability he still flourishes under another name, and in another profession; for the wise of this world are few, and the foolish are many.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE INFAMOUS CONDUCT OF MESSIEURS HALFMAINE AND LOVEWOOD, INN-KEEPERS OF BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON.—MR. WELLER'S ANECDOTE.—A CARNIVAL MASQUERADE, ITS PARTICULARS, AND RESULTS.

About four months had passed away since the marriage of Mr. Nassau Siffkin and the accomplished Mrs. Weston; and during that period Mr. Winkle had returned to London to pass a few weeks in the bosom of his family, as the pathetic language of modern days expresses a short sojourn in one's own house. He then rejoined his friends in Paris; and as the day of his arrival in that city once more was only a month or so after the sixth of January, he brought an enormous twelfth-cake with him from one of the most approved pastry-cook's shops in London.

"You have just come back in time, my dear Winkle," said Mr. Pickwick, when the usual welcomes, enquiries, and congratulations, incidental to the meeting of friends, had taken place. "We are all going to a grand masquerade at the Hotel de Ville to-morrow night."

"Where there will be crowds of the prettiest girls in Paris," added Mr. Tupman. "It is Carnival time, you know."

"And where the brows of the poet shall be covered with laurel in reality," observed Mr. Snodgrass.

"Quite right," said Mr. Pickwick; "and where they give you the best rum-punch you ever tasted."

These inducements were too strong to be resisted even for a moment: Mr. Winkle accordingly expressed his willingness to accompany his friends; and another ticket was immediately procured through the agency of Mr. Samuel Weller.

"Did you hear anything of Siffkin, when you were in town?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, without the slightest traces of emotion manifested upon his countenance.

"I believe he is tolerably well contented with the match," replied Mr. Winkle. "But how do you think he was served by a rascally inn-keeper a few weeks after his arrival in London?"

Of course Mr. Pickwick did not know; and so Mr. Winkle satisfied his curiosity as follows:—

"When Siffkin and his bride were safely arrived in London," said Mr. Winkle, "they went first to a hotel, till the house, which Siffkin had occupied as a bachelor, could be prepared for them. Well—they put up at the ———— Hotel in Bridge Street, Blackfriars; and very freely they lived; for Siffkin had plenty of ready money at the

time. They invited their friends, and gave large parties; and every Monday morning the bill was sent up, and it was paid with the utmost regularity. The amounts were never less than thirty pounds a week, and very often a great deal more. So, the dinners which Siffkin gave, led to others which his friends gave in return at the same place, and all for the purpose of benefiting the proprietors of the hotel, whose names are Halfmaine and Lovewood. In fact, those gentlemen (the landlords, I mean) acknowledged themselves that they never had had such good customers as Mr. and Mrs. Siffkin and their friends. Well—to make the story short—one Monday morning the bill was sent up as usual; and when Siffkin looked into his desk, he found that he had not enough to settle it. So off he walked to his stock-broker to obtain some more ready money (for they say that Siffkin is worth upwards of twelve or fourteen hundred a year)—but his stock-broker was out of town, and was not expected back for two or three days. He did not, however, choose to employ another; and so he returned to the hotel, and informed the landlords that they should have their money in the course of a day or two. But it appeared that Mr. Halfmaine is the worst man in the world, if you once miss payment; and he was on this occasion anything but civil to poor Siffkin. Siffkin did not, however, notice the fellow's insolence, but hastened to his own room. In two days he received a very peremptory note, demanding immediate payment, at which conduct he was naturally very indignant, having paid upwards of two hundred pounds during the previous six weeks in the hotel. He therefore hastened into the city to obtain some funds, accompanied by his wife. It was, unfortunately for him, a holiday at the Bank, and he could not sell out. On his return to his hotel, he found that Mr. Halfmaine had seized his boxes, locked up his rooms, and ordered the waiter not to serve him with anything more till his bill was paid. He did not hesitate a moment what step to pursue; but hastened to borrow the money of a friend, and discharged the amount forthwith."

"I never heard of such infamous treatment in my life," said Mr. Pickwick, when Mr. Winkle had thus detailed the vile proceedings of the inn-keepers.

"Nor I," observed Mr. Tupman. "If such conduct were made public, it would ruin the hotel."

"Siffkin advertised Halfmaine's behaviour in the *Satirist*," continued Mr. Winkle, "and told all his friends of the way in which he had been served. But what do you think was the landlord's excuse?"

"I really can't say," cried Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh!" continued Mr. Winkle, "that he was only a beginner, that he had very heavy debts to pay, and was so pressed for money he did not know where to turn to get it. As Siffkin very naturally observed, why the deuce did he keep a hotel, if he hadn't the means to behave with even decent liberality?"

"Talkin' o' hot-tels," observed Mr. Weller, who had been an attentive listener to the above narrative, "puts me in mind o' the vay in vich that there adwertising clerk as I spoke about afore von day, chiselled the lady out o' the adwertisement."

"What was that, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"The lady, Sir," resumed Mr. Weller, "vos a stayin' at Vebb's in Piccadilly; and as she'd jist come from France and a-tired o' travellin', as the sayin' is, she adwertised a wery nice carriage to be disposed on. But she didn't insert her adwertisement in the *Nightingale*, vich vos Dusty Bob's look-out. So he goes straight avay to Vebb's, and asks arter Lady Catamaran, for that vos the lady's name.—Vot's your bisness, old feller?' says the vaiter; for Bob's clothes vosn't the best in the vorld.—Bob didn't make no reply, but pinted to the adwertisement in the *Eagle*, and assumed a wery important look indeed.—'Blowed if this ain't some old miser come about that there carriage,' says the vaiter to his-self: 'them as has money doesn't care about dress; and them as hasn't can't care.'—So Bob vos interdooced to Lady Catamaran's sitting-room, jist as the old dowager had put her brandy-flask under the cushin of the sofy.—'Dress don't make the man,' says old Lady Catamaran to herself, as she glanced her eye at Bob's coat, the elbers of vich vos precious vite, sure-ly; 'but manners does,' she added, seein' that Bob vos a-bowin' avay like a master o' the ceremonies at a county-ball.—So she wery perlitely rekvested the gen'leman to be seated, and enquired vot he'd be arter proposin' for the carriage.—'Oh! the carriage, is it, my Lady?' cries Bob. 'Och! and sure you're not thinkin' I'm come to spake about that? Is it me, your Ladyship's nonour, as can't afford to step into a clane shirt, that can step into a coach?'—'Vot, then, may be your hobject in callin' on me, my good Sir?' says her Ladyship.—'That's it entirely, my Lady,' says Bob: to do you good—to perwent you havin' the trouble o' sendin' your adwertisement to the *Eagle*, I'm come jist for to fetch it for the *Nightingale*. At vot hour shall I call to-morrow, my Lady?'—'I'm wery much obleeged, Sir,' says Lady Catamaran; 'but I ain't a-goin for to insert it not no more.'—'Och! an' you vill, plase your Ladyship's honour,' says Bob, 'both for your own good and the good o' the *Nightingale*, as is the best of all the evening papers. And then, only think vot a dale o' trouble you'd save yourself, my Lady,' continues Bob, 'if, ven you're in your own house, and inclined for to give a swarry, instead o' sendin' out five hundred inwitations by a futman, you vos jist to throw in a bit of a advertisement in the *Nightingale;—Lady Catamaran expects all her friends to tay an' a dance on Vensday.* Och! an' it ud soon be the fashion!'—'It's a wery bright hidear,' says Lady Catamaran, 'an' I'll sartainly think on it. In the meantime—'—'In the manetime, I'll call every day, my Lady, wid your lave,' says Bob, 'till you've got a *inwite* for me to put into the *Nightingale*.'—Vell, Sir, all this ended in Bob's so insinivatin' his-self into the good graces o' the old lady, that she orders him a go o' someot short, an' gives him her adwertisement for the carriage every day till she disposed on it. Wery generous conduct it where too, as the poor man said ven the overseer gived him half a loaf for his vife and nine small children."

Thus, conversation, eating, drinking, and sleeping passed away the time as usual; and on the following evening the Pickwickians prepared for the masquerade.

Mr. Pickwick himself determined to maintain his celebrated and well-known character, and to personate in a fancy dress the Traveller

he was in reality. He therefore composed his attire of the characteristic vestments of many nations, which he commingled together in the most interesting and harmonious fashion his fertile brain could suggest. He wore a pair of large Turkish trowsers tied loosely just below the knees; and his feet and ankles were embellished with Scotch sandels. His waistcoat was of rein-deer skin, to indicate the attire of the Laplander; and his coat was the one he was in the daily habit of wearing, and which had been fabricated in England. His gloves were formed of the hide of a Russian bear; and his neckcloth was a musk-rat skin imported from the wilds of America. On his head he wore a Mandarin skull-cap; and in his right hand he carried the tail of a lion originally caught in the interior of Africa. Around his neck hung a chain of shells such as the savages of distant islands use for the current coin of their realms; and lastly, his expressive features were concealed by a Spanish mask.

Mr. Tupman had not been less ingenious than his great leader in the choice of suitable raiment; and with that disdain for a too servile imitation which often characterizes the minds of eminent men, he, properly regardless of the discrepancy in cubic proportions between himself and the fabulous little deity of the heathen mythology, determined upon the personation of Cupid. He accordingly obtained a mask which bestowed upon him a pair of good fat cheeks and a very pouting mouth; and as he could not exactly preserve the primitive state of nature in which the God of Love is usually represented, he wisely adopted the dress of an ancient Roman, with the addition of a pair of large wings which he and Mr. Snodgrass fabricated with wire and pink gauze-paper. Add to these little articles of vestment, a bow and a quiver full of arrows; and the portrait of Mr. Tupman is complete.

Mr. Snodgrass ably sustained the character for talent and ingenuity which so highly distinguished his illustrious friends. He had taken upon himself the enviable but somewhat difficult task of personating the character of Pegasus, the winged horse of the Muses; and, in order to do the more honour to the quadruped beloved by the poets (and not as malicious tongues have asserted, the better to suit his own convenience), he retained his upright position, thus making the Parnassian animal walk upon his hind legs. A dress had been contrived for that purpose; and a good deal of wadding, added to a considerable quantity of skilfulness, rendered the attire as perfect as could have been expected. The wings, the mane, and the tail were all complete; a large mask, in the shape of a horse's head, disguised the animated countenance of the poet; and all he had to do was to keep his arms stretched out in the manner in which a horse would be supposed to hold up his fore legs were it in a sitting posture.

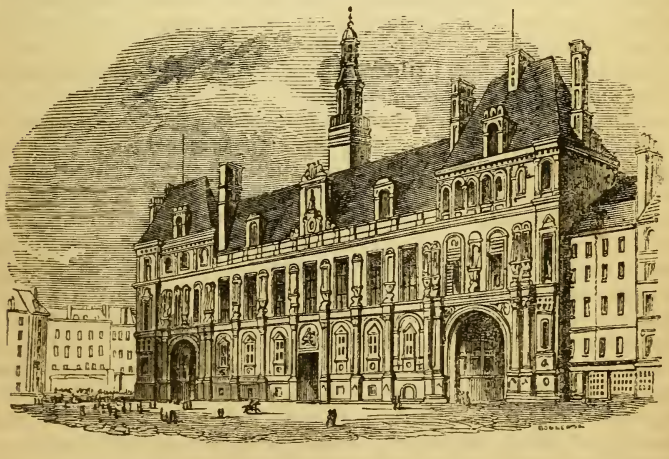
And lastly comes Mr. Winkle, to whom had been assigned the part of Nimrod; not the *Gentleman* who used to write in the *New Sporting Magazine*,—but the mighty hunter of ancient days. There was nothing very peculiar in this gentleman's garb, save that it was composed entirely of skins. His cap, to which a sort of vizor, that entirely concealed his face, was attached, was cut from the hide of a leopard; his tunic was a lion's skin, the tail serving as a girdle; his

breeches had once adorned a panther; and as he was uncertain what kind of boots his great prototype might have worn, he had prudently retained his own, having, with admirable forethought and ingenuity, had a pair of leathern tops affixed to them. His arms consisted of javelins, a hatchet, a sword, and a bow and arrows; and over his shoulder hung a large bag filled with straw, to represent the one in which Nimrod doubtless carried his game.

Such were the several characters, and such the dresses, fancifully chosen by the immortal heroes of these Memoirs: and when we contemplate the magnitude of those minds which could thus harmonize and associate so many grand difficulties and discrepancies into one uniform whole, we are lost in astonishment at the extent of that assemblage of genius, which has shed immortal honour on the pages of its country's history!

At nine o'clock a coach was called, and the four masks introduced themselves into the vehicle; not, however, without imminent peril to the wings of Messieurs Tupman and Snodgrass, and to the general arrangements of the whole of the latter gentleman's toilet. Mr. Winkle's spears and javelins pointed out of the window; and when Mr. Pickwick stepped into the coach, he switched his lion's tail backwards and forwards in a manner which threw a crowd of curious spectators into convulsions of delight.

In a very short time the vehicle arrived at the Hotel de Ville—a building remarkable for its being one of the first attempts to depart



from the Saracenic or Gothic style which distinguished the public edifices of the Middle Ages. The Salle St. Jean, or Hall of St. John, is an extensive parallelogram, decorated with twelve magnificent Corinthian pillars; and it was into this splendid room that Mr. Pickwick and his friends—or rather, the Universal Traveller, Cupid, Pegasus, and Nimrod were introduced by the proper ushers or attendants upon the ceremony.

The hall (which, by the bye, had once been a church) was splendidly fitted up for the occasion; and although it was in the very depth of winter, the most lovely flowers were arranged in profusion around. The hall was crowded with people when the Pickwickians arrived; and all the efforts of imagination had been used to create variety of character. But, to do the justice they deserve even to great men, no characters were so truly original or so exceedingly remarkable as those which were enacted by Mr. Pickwick and his companions. Mr. Snodgrass in particular attracted universal attention; and his presence in the room was immediately welcomed by a burst of admiration expressed through the unequivocal meaning of an universal shout of laughter on the part of the gentlemen, and an irrepressible titter on that of the ladies. Mr. Tupman was then the object of general scrutiny; and as he was an exceedingly fat, not to say overgrown, Cupid, it was sometime before his character was understood.

It was imagined by many, but with what degree of justice we leave the reader to determine, that Mr. Pickwick cut a very comical figure in his oriental trowsers and European coat. Mr. Pickwick, however, did *not* think so; and though we would rather take the opinion of a learned man like him to be the correct one, in preference to the united sentiments of two or three hundred common observers, we must ourselves confess that his appearance was in some way calculated to excite the merriment of the foolish and laughter-loving portion of the company. As for Mr. Winkle, he was taken for an imitator of the keeper of a menagerie of wild beasts, whose skins he converted to his own personal use at their deaths; and so he escaped any particular notice.

We said the spacious hall was crowded with a variety of characters. There were kings enough to govern all the nations of Europe, and two or three to spare; and there were Queens sufficient to drive the aforesaid Kings, including even those to spare, out of their regal senses. There were Generals in quantities great enough to form an army by themselves; and Turks so numerous that all good Christians, if any were present, must have been put to the blush. Then there was a Columbine---a character which in England is usually personated by a slim young lady, who, after dancing a season or two at the Opera, marries a nobleman; and there was also a Harlequin to keep her company. Then a mother and her two daughters represented the Three Graces; and a bevy of boarding-school girls fulfilled the parts of the Nine Muses in another part of the room. There were at least a dozen Bonapartes—three Pompeys—two Julius Cæsars—four Cleopatras—and half a score of Jews. Several individuals, doubtless under the fear of being improperly conspicuous, had assumed such nondescript dresses that their wearers might as well have passed themselves for decayed gentlemen of the sixteenth century as for heroes of any other; and not a few had made slight but venial mistakes in the characters they *did* assume. Such was the case with an Englishman who was personating Othello through the medium of a black face and a pair of tops and cords; and with a Scotchman who carried a musket over his shoulder as Sir William Wallace. One of the Julius Cæsars wore a watch and seals, and a Cleopatra a pair of diamond

ear-rings: a Pompey had a ring with a crest on his finger; and a Bonaparte ran out of the room and retired very rapidly to his own lodgings, when he became engaged in a dispute with one of his own marshals, who threatened to pull his imperial nose in the presence of the whole company.

For some time the Pickwickians kept together, because the several masks that at first accosted them spoke in French, and were unable to receive any intelligible replies. But at length Miss Chizzlewizzle, who was attired as Diana (some mistook her for a Turkish lady on account of the crescent which she wore upon her forehead), entered into conversation with Mr. Tupman, as did Lady Ptolemy Binks, who had assumed the character of a Lovely Savage, with Mr. Pickwick. Messieurs Snodgrass and Winkle were therefore separated from their companions and cast for amusement upon the resources of each other.

"How exceedingly amusing," said Mr. Winkle, who had just run the point of his javelin about a quarter of an inch into his shoulder.

"Very," returned Mr. Snodgrass, his arms aching to distraction on account of the posture in which he was obliged to hold them.

"So gay," added Mr. Winkle, wishing in his own mind, that there were only a few more English people present, or that he knew how to distinguish those who were.

"I never was so much delighted in all my life," rejoined Mr. Snodgrass.

At this moment Pegasus and Nimrod were accosted by a Gipsy.

"English?" said the Gipsy, very abruptly, and in a tone of voice evidently feigned.

Messieurs Winkle and Snodgrass replied in the affirmative.

"Don't know me, s'pose?" asked the Gipsy.

"No. Do you know us?" returned Mr. Winkle.

"Arabella quite well?" demanded the mask.

"That's a coincidence only," said Mr. Snodgrass in a whisper to Mr. Winkle. "Now—my good woman—do you mean to say you know *me*?" continued Mr. Snodgrass, addressing himself to the Gipsy.

"How's Emily?" asked the mask.

Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle exchanged significant glances, the one through his horse's head, the other through his bearded mask.

"Vell, this is rayther too strong, as the alderman's lady said ven she sipped her iced punch," cried the Gipsy, with a pleasing laugh. "Blowed if Jack Ketch ud a-knowed me here?"

"What, Sam, is that you?" enquired Mr. Winkle sternly. "How did you get here?"

"Through the wery common means of a hackney coach and a pair o' osses, Sir," was the immediate answer.

"But for what purpose, Sam, do you intrude into a room where gentlemen and ladies only are admitted?" continued Mr. Winkle.

"I rayther think that any von as has got a ticket can go to the balls in France," answered Mr. Weller: "at all events I'm here; an' a self evident propysition it therefore is. As for motives, Mr. Vinkle, I has a dozen on 'em cut an' dry, as the undertaker said to the 'ooman

ven she asked him arter a coffin for her husband as vos at the pint o' death."

"Well, what are they, Sam?" continued Mr. Winkle.

"Beg pardon, Sir," said Mr. Weller, "but I thought as how that your dresses vos so wery orkard, there might be a little inconwenience re-sulting from their wery pekooliar ef-fect. So I jist dropt in to keep a look out arter the governor. You needn't say I'm here, Mr. Vinkle —nor you, neither, Mr. Snodgrass: an' if so be there ain't no row, you needn't remark as how I've been, vich is wot the new police says ven they go in disguise to public meetin's."

Having delivered this caution, Mr. Weller mingled with the throngs of masks, and amused himself in a variety of original and intellectual ways. He pulled the pig-tail of a Voltaire, flattened the crown on the head of a king, kindly offered to box with an emperor for a bowl of punch, and assured a duchess "that she was the prettiest gal as ever he'd seen," although she wore a mask. These jokes were taken for the forced ebullitions of an assumed character and not for the spontaneous effusions of innate facetiousness.

In the course of the evening Mr. Chitty made his appearance; and as he was already aware of the characters which his friends intended to assume, he hastened to join Messieurs Winkle and Snodgrass.

The poet was dressed *as* a poet: i. e. he personated Gray's Bard. He wore a large black robe of serge texture, and a leathern belt round his waist; and something very much resembling an English Judge's wig, with the tail of a white horse attached to the back of it, "streamed like a meteor to the troubled air." He had not been able to procure a mask exactly suited to his character: but he was not nice to a trifle; and so he had borrowed one from a clown at a theatre, who was a friend of his. Through this mask might be seen a pair of eyes that were anything but "haggard:" but, as a *tout ensemble*, the character was as well represented as those characters usually are. In fine, Mr. Chitty carried a lyre under his arm, and looked as much like a man who intended to plunge "deep in the roaring tide to endless night" as the Salle St. Jean itself looked like a roaring tide, or the glare of lamps like an endless night, for him to plunge into.

"Well—here we are *apud ultimum*—at last," said Mr. Chitty, as he accosted Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle.

"Are you all alone?" enquired Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes," replied the poet. "Mr. Scuttle would n't come: he says he hasn't yet forgotten the conduct of his niece; Kallaway never goes to such places as this—*velut hoc*; and Walker hadn't any clothes to come in—*venire in*."

In the meantime Mr. Pickwick had offered his arm to Lady Ptolemy Binks, he having been persuaded by that lady to reveal his name, and she having made a similar confidential avowal to him.

"Have you heard about *them* since that awful day, Mr. Pickwick?" enquired Lady Binks.

"Who?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"That faithless creature and her husband, Mr. Pickwick," was the answer delivered in a tone of assumed melancholy, which admirably became the Handsome Savage.

"Oh! very frequently," replied Mr. Pickwick, not at all affected by the reminiscence. "But will you take an ice? Allow me to assist you. I shall try this punch."

And as he thus spoke, Mr. Pickwick handed Lady Binks one of those agreeable articles of luxury which the French eat in the winter as well as in the summer; and having thus acquitted himself, he just tried a couple of good strong glasses of punch, the first having been so palatable as to induce him to essay a second.

"I suppose that all your friends are here this evening, Mr. Pickwick?" observed Lady Ptolemy Binks.

"Oh! yes," returned Mr. Pickwick. "Tupman is that Cupid you see yonder—the Pegasus is Snodgrass—and Nimrod is Winkle. What do you think of their dresses?"

"Admirable," returned Lady Binks. "Mr. Tupman, in particular, makes an excellent Cupid; only, he should have got the Swiss Giantess to have enacted the part of Venus. But, by the way, I have myself two friends here to whom I am acting the part of *chaperon*."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Poor things!" continued Lady Binks, "they are partaking of the pleasures of the metropolis after a long series of suffering and misery But they are well and happy now—and the physicians have recommended gaiety and amusement."

"Was their's a very peculiar case, then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Alas! yes," returned Lady Binks. "Do you see yonder couple, near the myrtles at the other side of the room? A minstrel walking with a shepherdess—that lady with the most lovely figure in the hall?"

Mr. Pickwick took a tolerably long survey of the pretty figure which was pointed out to him, and Lady Binks continued her observations.

"They are a young married couple, who have passed through a great deal," said Lady Binks. "But I wonder you have never heard of the Melvilles!"

"The Melvilles?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

Lady Binks reiterated the name.

"Excuse me for one moment," said Mr. Pickwick; and without waiting for the permission he seemed to solicit, he hastily left Lady Binks, and sought the spot where Mr. and Mrs. Melville were standing.

"My dear Mrs. Melville," said the good-natured Mr. Pickwick taking that lady's hand and pressing it with a fervour which at first astonished both her and her husband: "I am so delighted to see you here—really I could dance for joy;"—and the tears ran down Mr. Pickwick's cheeks beneath his mask. "My name is Pickwick," continued our excellent hero, "the gentleman who—"

"Oh! I recollect your kindness, my dear Sir," exclaimed Mrs. Melville, returning the friendly pressure with reciprocal warmth; "and I shall recollect it till my death," she added emphatically.

"My dear Madam," returned Mr. Pickwick, "allow me to felicitate you on this happy event."

"And allow me to thank you" rejoined the beautiful Eliza, "for

the kind enquiries you made concerning my husband, and more especially for the delicacy with which you communicated the result of those enquiries to me. John, this is Mr. Pickwick, of whom I have spoken to you," added Mrs. Melville, turning towards her husband.

Mr. Pickwick shook hands with the hero of the sad tale he had read some months previously, and a silence of several minutes ensued.

"We have experienced a reverse in our fortunes," at length observed Mrs. Melville, "as favourable as the other was disastrous. A relative has died and left us all his property."

Mr. Pickwick understood the meaning of these words, as they were connected with the incidents he had perused in Eliza's manuscript; and he hastened to change the conversation by informing her how he had ascertained that she was present in the room. He then bade the re-united couple farewell for the evening, promised to call upon them at their lodgings on the following day, and returned to his friends, whom we left, as the reader will remember, with Mr. Chitty. In the course of a few minutes they were joined by Mr. Tupman, who had concluded his *tête-á-tête* with Miss Chizzlewizzle; and thus the little party was again complete.

Towards one o'clock the ladies began to take their departure, and the gentlemen were consequently enabled to give more scope to their merriment, and to a small system of practical joke. A party of young Englishmen, who were considered, or considered themselves (the phrases are synonymous in modern fashionable life), to be wags in their way, now paid more particular attention to the fancy-dresses of the Pickwickians than they hitherto had done; and upon the suggestion of one of them that the Poet or Bard ought to be mounted upon Pegasus, they very deliberately seized hold of Mr. Septimus Chitty and pitched him upon the back of Mr. Augustus Snodgrass, who fell, beneath the weight, a heavy load upon the floor.

Mr. Pickwick, whose brain was somewhat confused with hot punch and the excitement of the evening, rushed valiantly forward, and laid about him amongst the young English assailants with his ponderous lion's tail; but those young gentlemen, not relishing this species of warfare, were preparing to make a desperate onslaught on Mr. Pickwick and his friends, when there suddenly appeared amongst them an individual, habited as a Gipsy, who began knocking two or three of them down without the slightest reference to any modern ceremony, and in the most masculine manner in the world.

The warfare soon became general. Mr. Pickwick continued to lay about him *with* his lion's tail, and *without* any attention to which side he attacked; Mr. Tupman caught hold of his great leader's coat-tails, and begged him to moderate his anger; Mr. Winkle hastened to conceal himself behind one of the Corinthian pillars; Mr. Snodgrass had somehow or another got his arms and legs entangled in his quadrupedian attire, and could not rise from the ground; and Mr. Chitty pretended to have been stunned by his fall, because, as he afterwards expressed himself, it would not have been seemly for the last of the Welsh Bards to have departed this life through a blow of a clenched fist in a drunken frolic at a masked ball, instead of the only legitimate means by which a poet can or ought to die—viz., suicide or a natural death.

But Mr. Weller fought for himself and his masters too. He knocked one antagonist over Mr. Snodgrass, and then knocked him off again; he noticed that another had a somewhat prominent nose, and so he flattened it a little, to harmonize the better with the rest of its proprietor's countenance; he perceived that a third had two fine large blue eyes, and he therefore varied their usual appearance by making them black ones; and lastly, he perpetrated a little miniature Marengo by the numbers he levelled with the ground. The assailants, however, rallied again; and the combat would have been sanguinary in the extreme, had not a couple of Gendarmes made their appearance, and separated the pugilists in the twinkling of an eye.

"Vell, this is rayther hot vork," said Mr. Weller, as he yielded to the advice of a Gendarme, and retreated from the field of action. "Drinks is in, vits is out."

"What! is that you, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, as he sank upon a seat.

"My own wery na'tral self, an' no sangvinary mistake, as the speret o' Mrs. Weale used for to say on wery partickler oc-casions," returned Mr. Weller, laying aside his mask. "An' wery glad I am for to see you, Sir, as the gen'leman said to the ghost vich told him of a treasure."

"Is any assistance wanted to thrash those fellows?" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, suddenly emerging from behind the pillar with his javelins in his hand. "Only tell me where they are—"

"There they be, Sir," said Mr. Weller, very coolly.

"And must I pitch into them, Sam?" demanded Mr. Winkle, in a very curious tone of voice for a man who talked of pitching into people.

"Pray reserve that there wery high double-pressure ower-bilin' courage o' your'n, Sir," returned Mr. Weller; for in the present state o' your excited mind, I'm blowed if you vouldn't rush slap through 'em and get avay on t'other side."

"I'll have this disgraceful outrage put in the *novo papyro*—newspaper," cried Mr. Chitty, whose lyre, which he had borrowed of a neighbour, was broken to atoms in the conflict; and as he had already lost two umbrellas belonging to the said neighbour, he did not know very well what excuse to make relative to the fracture of the lyre.

"I vos quite sure," said Mr. Weller, "that there ud been some kick-up on account o' them galliwanting dresses. Vere's the use o' goin' an' makin' osses o' von's self in the fust place, vild beastesses on ourselves in the second place, vith all kinds o' outlandish skins, an' hides, an' young Cupids an' Poets in the third place? You're men, and not brutes or Gods; so vot's the good o' bad imitations?"

The dispute was now brought to a termination, so was Mr. Weller's eloquence: the whole party therefore proposed to depart; and in obedience to this unanimous wish, as well as to the advice of the Gendarmes, the Salle St. Jean was speedily vacated by the belligerents.

CHAPTER XLIX

MR. ADOLPHUS CRASHEM, ALIAS MR. WILLIAM SUGDEN, ALIAS COUNT BOLOSKI OF BOLOSK, ALIAS CAPTAIN HORATIO CLARENCE WALSINGHAM, FOUNDS AN INSTITUTION WHICH PROMISES TO BENEFIT MANKIND, IF MANKIND COULD ONLY BE PERSUADED OF THAT AND OTHER SIMILAR FACTS.

Some of the most brilliant specimens of human ingenuity and invention have emanated from a garret; and if the scheme, which a great man lately published to the world, and of which we are about to treat in this chapter, did not spring from quite so elevated a source as an attic on a fifth floor, it at all events originated in a three-pair back, in that salubrious and fashionable quarter of London, which has been denominated the New Cut.

The New Cut (our readers are suddenly transported to England) is a wide street, running from the Waterloo to the Blackfriars road. It is adorned with many spacious buildings, of which Maber's gin-palace, and the Victoria Theatre—both sources of innocent amusement in their way—are the principal. If you walk up the Cut from east to west, on your left hand is an almost unvaried series of old furniture shops, and on your right the attractive warehouses of pawnbrokers and pork-butchers. The foot-paths of the street themselves are also embellished with little portable shops, belonging to the purveyors of fried fish, toasted bread smeared with grease, baked potatoes, and little glass ornaments. The inhabitants of this select spot divide their time between their commercial operations and the gin-palaces; and as they issue in little crowds at a time from the latter, they just stop for one moment to listen to the itinerant preacher, who holds forth against the vice of intemperance and improper amusement, under the arcade of the Victoria Theatre, or in an empty shed close by. Fashion, in reference to clothing, is not much observed in the New Cut; nor are the distinctions of male and female attire very scrupulously attended to. Ladies may be seen with large great-coats upon their backs, disbursing their fried fish to those who honour them with their custom; and gentlemen, whose professional duties in the baked-potato line call them abroad, stand without any coats at all, on the edge of the pavement.

Discord is strangely mingled with peace in all mundane affairs; nor is the New Cut without its jars, either of jam or of battle. Some fair Helen is occasionally seduced by a wily Paris, through the medium of a glass of cordial gin, to desert her injured Manelaus; and then shirt-sleeves are turned up, blows are exchanged, and the trio is eventually walked off by a policeman to the office at Union-hall, where a wretched *ignoramus* of a magistrate disposes of the case according to his own caprice and whim, the executives at that justice-room being notoriously the most profoundly stupid, vulgar, and impertinent in London. Indeed, such deplorable ignorance was never manifested elsewhere as by those worthies in the respective cases of

Eliza Greenwood's murder, and the attempt at assassination upon the *soi-disant* Duke of Normandy.

But to continue. It will be perceived that the manners and appearance of the inhabitants of the New Cut are peculiar to that happy quarter. We must therefore suppose that some very prudential or profound motive could alone have prompted so fashionable an individual as Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham to select a temporary abode in one of the little houses on the left hand side, at the commencement of the Cut, by the Blackfriars-road. But such was the fact. Captain Walsingham, whom the reader has already known by the various names of Crashem, Sugden, and Boloski, was the happy tenant of a three-pair back sitting-room, and a four-pair back bedroom, *alias*, an agreeable and airy attic, in the locality above described.

On the morning upon which we are desirous of introducing our readers to Captain Walsingham, the breakfast things had been swept away, there not being many to sweep—the room carefully dusted out—and the table duly covered with a green-baize cloth which the landlady had borrowed from the pawnbroker's over the way. Captain Walsingham surveyed all these preparations with the most unfeigned delight; and when the little dirty servant, who ministered to his comforts and to those of the whole family (thirteen in all, besides the pigs in the back yard), had retired, Captain Walsingham placed about a dozen sheets of foolscap paper at equal distances round the table, and then laid a new pen, a small piece of blotting-paper, and a couple of wafers upon each of the sheets of foolscap thus disposed of. The inkstand was stood in the middle of the table, around which chairs were speedily arranged, a large Langham gracing the top, and a Windsor the bottom: and this being accomplished, Captain Walsingham expressed a wish to his landlady, whom he summoned to witness the preparations, "that the Directors would make their appearance."

No sooner were the words uttered, than a loud knock at the street-door seemed to proclaim that the wish they expressed stood some chance of being immediately attended to. The landlady rushed down stairs—Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham assumed a most business-like and sedate air, and a sober attitude—and in process of time, the vice-chairman was ushered into the room.

"Mr. Cherryburton, Sir, if you please," screamed the landlady, as she flung open the three-pair back door with as much importance as if it would admit the visitor into a palace.

"How are you, Mr. Cherryburton?" ejaculated the Captain, rushing forward to welcome the deputy-chairman of the infant Company whereof he himself was the managing director. "You see that I do the thing economically: it is no use taking offices and all that, till some of the advances upon the shares are made. I expect the printer to send me up the book with the printed forms every minute."

"Very good," returned Mr. Cherryburton, who was a very short and a very fat gentleman, with no neck, but plenty of head.

"Mr. Snuffery, Sir," cried the landlady after a short interval of about five minutes: and the treasurer, whose place was quite a sinecure, walked into the room.

"Welcome, Snuffery, old boy," ejaculated Captain Walsingham,

forgetting, in the excitement of the moment, the respect due to a treasurer, even by his great employer.

"*Mister* Snuffery, here," suggested the treasurer: "Snuffery at the ale-house, if you like;" it having been at the ale-house that the idea of establishing a Joint-stock Company first occurred to Captain Walsingham and Mr. Snuffery, as they discussed a pot of mild intermediate beer and a yard of clay some weeks previous to this meeting.

"Very good, very good," exclaimed Mr. Cherryburton: "there's nothing like standing up for etiquette;" and with these words he stood himself exactly before the fire, so that neither Captain Walsingham nor Mr. Snuffery felt the slightest benefit from that fraction of a vast elementary whole.

"Mr. Stephen Muzzlewhite and Mr. Watkins Welladay," chaunted the landlady, as two more full-grown directors of an infant project sallied into the room.

"Well, we shall be pretty numerous, I see," observed Mr. Cherryburton, pretending not to notice the desperate energy with which the new-comers rubbed their hands, and persisting in the retention of his enviable position in front of the fire.

"Yes, there'll be a tolerable sprinkle," coincided Mr. Snuffery; "and if every one will only subscribe for a certain number of shares and pay the earnest money, I may open my books at once."

"Oh! certainly—decidedly—we are all very ready to pay the earnest money," cried Captain Walsingham, instinctively glancing with great feeling to a pile of fourpence-halfpenny in coppers, with a sixpence upon the top, which he had prudently placed upon the mantel-piece, probably with an eye to a little display.

"Mr. Molesworthy," cried the landlady; and a very large nose, with an exceedingly small man behind it, entered the room; "and Mr. Muggins," continued the lessee of the house in an unusually shrilly tone of voice.

"Come in, Mr. Muggins," ejaculated Captain Walsingham: "pray come in—don't stand in the passage."

"A-don't now be foolish," echoed the landlady's voice in a whisper from the passage just alluded to; "I'll fetch you a slap over the face, I will. There now—you've quite tumbled my best cap, I declare."

Mr. Muggins, having been shrewdly suspected by his brother directors of perpetrating a kiss *vi et armis* upon the comely countenance of the landlady, now entered the room and paid his respects to the company.

"I think we are all assembled now," observed Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham; and, as if he had any moral doubt upon the subject, he pretended to count those present, referred to a list of names in his pocket-book, and then precipitated himself into the Langham chair. Mr. Snuffery fell into the Windsor ditto; and the remainder of the directors slid into their's without any farther invitation.

A general silence then prevailed throughout the room. This was at length broken by the chairman, who informed the meeting that they were sitting in Committee of Ways and Means, for the purpose of taking into consideration the financial department of the Universal Stone-Expelling and Asphaltum-Substituting Equitable Company.

"In opening the business of the day," observed Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham, "I have to observe that the prospects of the Company are most smiling and favourable. When I calculate the immense advantages which the introduction and use of the asphalte will confer upon society in general, I am lost in a wide field of admiration and delight. To see the streets, not only of London, but of every town, village, and hamlet, throughout this vast empire, composed of asphalte instead of paving-stones, is my most sanguine wish; and that such will be the result of our labours, Gentlemen, let us rest assured. *(Hear! hear.)* It may not be improper at this stage of the business," continued the worthy chairman, "to enumerate a few of the advantages attendant upon the use of the asphalte. In the first place, it will essentially benefit the pecuniary operations of many individuals resident in this vast metropolis; inasmuch as those discounters, whose methods of doing business have not unfrequently led them to offer half money and half paving-stones for suspicious bills, will suddenly find their rapacity deprived of the means of gratification; for what use will paving-stones be to any one when nothing but asphalte shall be in vogue? *(Loud cries of* 'Hear, hear;' *and* 'Bravo' *from Mr. Snuffery, who had done much in the discount way above described.)* Indeed," continued Captain Walsingham, affected almost to tears by the demonstrations of respect and admiration with which he was greeted,—"indeed, I may say, Gentlemen, that an universal good, as my friend the Great Cham used to observe to his prime minister Fiofunki-Khan, will be done to the nation by the use of our asphalte. Instead of shocking the ears of the delicate by noticing that such-and-such an unfortunate girl is compelled to walk the *pavé*, will it not be much more decent and becoming to hint that she promenades the asphaltum? Conceive, Gentlemen, the advantage attached to this circumstance alone, and rely upon our success as a thing certain—a self-evident proposition—an axiom—a—a result sincerely to be wished for by all." *(Loud cheers.)*

The Chairman resumed his lucid oration after having been welcomed with the most deafening applause.

"Gentlemen," said he, "in categorising the advantages which will accrue to society and, I may say, to the cause of civilization, by the application of our measures, let me not forget to observe that had Paris been lined with asphalte instead of paving-stones, the Revolution of July would never have taken place, because the citizens could not have formed barricades of the precious substance which we so enthusiastically advocate. (*Hear, hear.*) There will be no danger of tripping on a loose stone, with our asphaltum, upon which all men will walk with that springiness and elasticity which to the ancient pavement never *did*—never *could* belong. Money is to be made out of the asphalte; but no blood ever came from the stone! Let us all remember this ancient proverb, and regard it as a species of prophecy relative to the present undertaking!"

Mr. Snuffery beged to ask the Chairman if he intended anything personal by his allusion to the adage which states that one cannot get blood out of a stone. Mr. Muggins supported Mr. Snuffery's demand, and "begged to inform the Cheerman and all present that he dared look

any man in the face, that he didn't owe a blessed penny in the whole world, that no one could say black was the white of his eye, and that he would just like to know from the Cheerman's own lips who would say anything to the contrairey."

Captain Walsingham declared that his allusion was anything but personal: Mr. Snuffery observed that he was satisfied, but that if the explanation had not been given, he should most decidedly have resigned the post of treasurer to the Company—a statement, which, considering the nature of that Company's assets, filled the whole Committee with immediate alarm. This was only appeased by the production of a black bottle and the imbibing of a little drop of brandy by each member; without which sudden remedy, the whole business might have been blighted in the bud. Mr. Muggins, indeed, was so affected by the temporary misunderstanding, that he was under the necessity of filling his glass and emptying it three times before he could muster up sufficient strength to attend to business.

When something like order was restored, Captain Walsingham continued his truly wonderful oration as follows:—

"But, Gentlemen, I have only enumerated one half—indeed, I may safely say, only one quarter of the numerous advantages attending the substitution of asphalte for paving-stones. I have often remarked—and what gentleman present has not done the same?—I say, Gentlemen, that I have often remarked that the pavement, as it now exists, is frequently unsteady beneath the feet. Gentlemen, last evening only, I dined with a friend in the City—in fact, Gentlemen, to be candid with you, it was my old and much esteemed friend, Sir Barryl Punshun, the alderman and highly respected wine-merchant of Portsoken Ward; and as I came home, I found that the pavement down Ludgate Hill was so unsteady, I could scarcely walk on it. Now, will you believe it, Gentlemen, when I assure you that by the time I arrived at the foot of Blackfriars Bridge, I was compelled to lie down in the very street; on account of the turn the inequality and bad state of the pavement upon Ludgate Hill had given me? *(Groans and hisses.)* Mr. Muggins," continued the worthy Chairman, "I hope you will help yourself. Yes, Gentlemen, I can myself vouch for the truth of the circumstance; the stone pavement *is* unsafe—very unsafe, Gentlemen; and the asphaltum must replace it. I repeat it, Gentlemen—" and Captain Walsingham smote the table with amazing violence—"I repeat it, that you cannot walk with safety upon stone-pavement—and all I know is, that there are times (particularly after dinner) when *I* myself cannot even stand upright upon it."

"Our worthy Cheerman's quite right," exclaimed Mr. Muggins: "this house o' his'n is built upon stones, and blowed if it ain't so unsteady, I can't sit upon my cheer."

Perhaps it struck Mr. Muggins at this precise moment, that he might be able to sit upon the floor even if he could not retain his chair: at all events he placed himself comfortably under the table; and as the brandy he had drank was somewhat soporific in its effects, having been purposely hocussed by Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham, he sank into a mild and tranquil slumber, to the extreme comfort of himself and to the unmitigated disgust of his companions.

"Printer's brought the prospecktesses, he says, please Sir," exclaimed the landlady, thrusting her head in at the door just as Mr. Muggins thrust himself under the table.

"Oh! very well," cried Captain Walsingham, being perfectly aware that it was very ill. "Tell him to leave them—I can't attend to him now."

"Please, Sir," ejaculated the printer's boy, who had followed the landlady up the stairs as far as the door of the Captain's three-pair back,—"please, Sir, master said as how—"

"Very well, very well," interrupted the Chairman of the Universal Stone-Expelling and Asphaltum-Substituting Equitable Company: "I'll attend to it directly."

"That I vosn't to leave 'em without the money," added the boy, for the behoof of all the directors and the treasurer of the aforesaid eminent Company.

"Let him send in his bill to the Secretary," returned the Chairman: "the account shall be audited in due course."

"I'm very much afeerd mas'er don't know nothink about the Secreterry," answered the boy, putting his right hand to his nose, and the left hand after the right, and extending the fingers of both in truly interesting puerile sport.

"What—do you mean to say that *we* ain't to be trusted, you young rascal?" demanded Captain Walsingham.

"No—I doesn't; but mas'er does," replied this unaccountable boy, perfectly unawed by the presence of that which intended to be the richest Company in the world.

"Oh! he does—does he?" said Captain Walsingham, rising in state from his Langham chair, and preparing to kick the little boy down stairs; "well, then—you may just tell your master—"

"Stay, stay," interrupted Mr Muzzlewhite, "this affair will only do us harm. How much is your bill, youngster?"

"Three pound seven," returned the interesting youth, producing a dirty piece of paper.

"Well—here's ten bob towards it," exclaimed Mr. Muzzlewhite, throwing half-a-sovereign on the table.

The sum was soon made up amongst the directors, all of whom contributed something with the exception of Captain Walsingham and Messieurs Snuffery and Muggins—the first turning away to the window and whistling, with his hands in his pockets, as his friends subscribed for him; the second pretending to be asleep the moment anything like payment was spoken of; and the third being really in a state of somnolency under the table.

"What is the amount of the capital upon which the Company works?" demanded Mr. Muzzlewhite, when the three pound seven had been with difficulty raised amongst the directors, and when the printer's boy had taken himself off.

"Capital—one million," answered Captain Walsingham. "We couldn't do it upon less."

"Oh! no—decidedly not," cried Mr. Muzzlewhite.

Rich men do things cautiously and by hundreds or thousands: but individuals without a *sou* invariably found their speculations upon

millions. Not that we would wish to disparage the eminent Company of which we are now treating: on the contrary, we believe it to have been as highly respectable as it was considered to be by any one of its directors.

"But how shall we dispose of the shares?" enquired Mr. Watkins Welladay.

"By advertisement, to be sure," returned Captain Walsingham. "We must placard all the walls—bill the Magazines—"

"What! the powder magazines at Woolwich?" interrupted Mr. Muzzlewhite.

"No—*Fraser's*, *Blackwood's*, and the *Old Monthly*, to be sure," exclaimed Captain Walsingham; "and perhaps the *Gentleman's*."

"But where is the money to come from, to do all this?" enquired Mr. Snuffery.

"Where!" echoed Captain Walsingham, assuming a tone and attitude of the deepest indignation: "where? Why—from the Company's bankers, I should hope."

"Oh! very well," returned Mr. Snuffery, who was not however exactly aware that any account had been as yet opened at a banker's, or indeed that the Company was possessed of any account to open: but he did not choose, as he afterwards expressed himself, to irritate by useless interrogation the man to whom he owed his bread—and water, he might have added.

"Certainly," continued Captain Walsingham. "I have made arrangements with a capitalist, who will advance us five hundred pounds upon the strength of our firm, provided we take it out half in wine, and half in cigars. He *did* want to throw in a few pump-handles and patent axle-trees; but that did not suit my purpose. Now, the fact is—old Muggins must give us his acceptance—(there's no use my speechifying any longer, since he's asleep)—and I'll manage the rest."

"Yes," objected Mr. Welladay; "but will any bankers open an account with wine and cigars?"

"Well, you *are* green for the director of a Joint-Stock Company!" ejaculated Mr. Snuffery. "We must raise money upon them, don't you see?"

"And we must make haste about it too, Gentlemen," continued Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham; "for I understand that some low chap, an auctioneer—or some such thing in May-fair, is going to establish *his* Asphalte Company. But, thank God," added Captain Walsingnam, with the religious fervour which the subject very naturally originated, "*he'll* be obliged to take the pump-handles and patent axle-trees—aye, and the pumps, and the wheels themselves too—before *he'll* raise enough to carry *his* schemes into execution."

"How I abominate upstarts!" exclaimed Mr. Muzzlewhite, who had himself risen from the honest though somewhat mean employ of cad to an omnibus, through the various steps of hackney-coach man, cab-proprietor, horse-jobber, and parish clerk, to be (as we now find him) occupying the responsible and desirable place of director of a public Institution.

'But enough of the auctioneer and his Company," resumed Captain Walsingham: let me make a few more observations before I

declare that the sitting of this day's committee is over. I am sure you will all be delighted to hear that I have secured the patronage and support of Puffemorf—the sub-editor of the *Morning Tea-pot!*"

"No!" exclaimed several voices in tones expressive of the deepest admiration.

"Do I, or do I not look like a man who is deceiving you?" calmly returned the Chairman, as he glanced complacently and philanthropically around upon his great co-operators.

"No—no," echoed from all present, save Mr. Muggins and the Chairman himself.

"Well, then," continued Captain Walsingham, "since I deserve all your confidence, as the Great Cham used to observe to those faithful slaves whom he intended to put to death,—I will show you that I mean to retain it. Here, Gentlemen—here is a paragraph which will appear in the *Tea-pot* of tomorrow-morning. Mr. Snuffery, do me the favour, as treasurer, to read it."

Mr. Snuffery, who, notwithstanding the nature of his appointment, had nothing to treasure up but the speeches of the Chairman, immediately complied with that individual's request, and read the contents of a little piece of paper, which was handed to him, as follows:—

"The Duke of Wellington.—It is a well-known fact that this illustrious commander gave peace to Europe by the achievements he and his gallant followers performed at Waterloo. The reputation of his Grace is the most eminent that can be conceived: it seems to stand alone in the English annals of renown—its supernal lustre throws all others into a deep shade. Yet even this enviable and extensive reputation may eventually find a rival; and if such be the will of destiny, then will the honour of this great competition be decidedly awarded to Walsingham and Company's Asphaltum.

"Well, I never could have fancied what was coming," exclaimed Mr. Welladay, as the treasurer brought the perusal of this most erudite paragraph to a conclusion.

"It was Puffemorf's idea," exclaimed Captain Walsingham. "Why—it will create a more powerful sensation in the fashionable world than Twaddlehem's new novel."

"Very good, very good," observed Mr. Cherryburton, whose nose seemed to indicate that he was not indifferent to cherry-brandy.

"It ain't bad," kindly assented Mr. Molesworthy.

"What ain't?—the brandy?" murmured Mr. Muggins from beneath the table, where he had just awoke: "ask the Cheerman then to pour me out another thimble-full."

But the Chairman perceived that there was not another thimble-full, nor yet half an one, to pour out; so Mr. Muggins and his request were disregarded.

"Where did you first see this wonderful Asphaltum?" enquired Mr. Welladay of the gallant captain at the head of the table.

"Upon the Boulevards in Paris," was the reply. "And while I think of it," continued the Chairman, "I forgot to mention that I have written to some very eminent gentlemen—friends of mine—who are at present residing in the French metropolis, and who will not only establish agencies, *et cetera*, for us, but will also take a considerable number of shares."

"So much the better," ejaculated Mr. Welladay, casting a glance of the deepest admiration at the respectable Chairman.

"Nay—more than that," continued Captain Walsingham, "I am every minute expecting a reply to my letter. The foreign delivery is late to-day."

Scarcely were the words out of the Chairman's mouth, when the well-known double-knock of the postman echoed through the house. How many an anxious bosom heaves, and hearts beat quickly at that thrilling sound, upon which often—too often, hang life and death, joy or sorrow, prosperity or despair!

The landlady made her appearance with a letter, for which Mr. Welladay paid the postage, as the Chairman seemed to be absorbed in the examination of the address, which was not in the hand-writing of Mr. Pickwick, as he had expected it to be. But it was a very singular and truly original hand-writing—not running parallel with the top of the paper, but curiously obliqued from one corner to another—in other words, diagonal. The capital letters too, were, by way of variation, placed in the middle of sentences: indeed, not to keep the reader any longer in suspense, the superscription stood thus:—

"capting Valsinghame eskvire
"number six
"noo Cut
"Lundun."

Captain Walsingham felt convinced that Mr. Pickwick could not be the author of so extraordinary a specimen of orthography. He therefore tore the letter open, and to his most unfeigned astonishment perused the following document:—

"Sir,

"I don't say persisely that you shall have your vay vith the guvner, nor does i insinivate for a moment that you shan't. all i vishes to no is vether you don't vish you may get it.

"now raly, mi fine feller, vi doesn't you draw it raythe more milder, as the gen'leman said to the barmade ven she drew him half a pint o' Mukes's best. you thinks no von can sea but yourself an that other peepel has got nothin' but dust in their hi. vereas ve all seas as far into a brik vall as you. pon my vord you're a wery nice little boy, air you not now?

"vot is all this preshus bother about assfaltes and orsefaltes as you're talkin' about. an then to tri 2 lett in the pore guvner as vos like a farthur to you ven you vos in trubble in saint pellagee. i'm raly ashaymed on you. it ain manners. as the owersear said to the porper vich asked tvice for supe.

"now the fect o' the caise is this here. your letter cum this mornin. an guvner an the other gen'lemen is all gon to brekfust vith scuttel in the roo tayboo. but i nose your an riting so i jist pepes into the billey doo an tvigs a rummy vord as vos harder than the art of a pore lor commisshunner. vell i thort *this* vos raythe qvere, so i looks a little deeper an' i sees vot you're up 2 in a minit. as i takes the guvners intrist wery much to art i opins the hepistle an' redes him from the dait to the naim at the eend. if i ad not none your an ritin

i shud a nown your triks. so i didn't sho the letter to the guvner but ansers you insted. nothin like doin things vons-self, as the italian markiss observed to the brayvo vich offered to kill his elder brother.

"so now, mi fine feller, i thinks as how i've setteld your hashe. vi you must think as how that trees isn't grener than pickvick. god Bless your hignorents. if pickvick's grene sam veller's not. like mas-'er like man don't inwariably stand good. so no more at present, as the parson said ven he'd preched the congregashun aslepe, from your wery faythful servant to command.

"SAMIVEL VELLER.

"if you don't like to pay the postige you needn't take it in. there has bin a many wery affectionate enquiries about you since your affair vith mister snodgrass and the young countess. dumong, the jonny darmy, ud like to shake ans vith you wery much. but i'm afeerd that if he vonce got you his love is so grate he vouldn't like to part vith you. this postscrip is rayther longer than i ment it to be. so i'll jist countersine it as that feller roland says on his makassar ile bottles.

"S. VELLER,
"to vit."

"Any good news?" enquired Mr. Welladay, when Captain Walsingham had terminated the perusal of his letter.

"No—no," returned that gentleman, very deliberately folding up the epistle and conveying it to his pocket. "It is only a private communication from my friend, the Minister of Foreign Affairs."

"Oh! indeed," exclaimed Mr. Welladay; "then it's nothing about the asphalte concern?"

"Nothing," answered the worthy Chairman, looking very much at that moment as if his correspondence ought to be with the Prefect of Police instead of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which it very likely would have been had he existed within the jurisdiction of the first-mentioned authority.

Matters having been brought to this very satisfactory point, and Mr. Muggins being too much overcome with liquor to give any acceptances at that moment, the meeting broke up; and Mr. Muggins himself was conveyed home on a shutter.

CHAPTER L.

THE EXECUTION OF FIESCHI, PEPIN, AND MOREY.—AN APPROPRIATE ODE.

The morning of the 23rd of February was cold and rainy; and as Mr. Pickwick and his three friends stepped into a hackney-coach at about seven o'clock, they were fain to button their great-coats tightly around themselves, and pull their comforters up to their very lips. They did not enter into conversation, the moment the door was closed upon them, as they were wont to do; but their manners were reserved,

their looks anxious, and their deportment remarkable. They had resolved to witness a scene of bloodshed and horror, which they were bound to be present at in their capacity of travellers, but at which their good feelings experienced the greatest repugnance. On that morning, Fieschi, Pepin, and Morey were condemned to die!

The vehicle rolled rapidly along, till it arrived at the Barrier where the execution was to take place. The terrible instrument of death had been erected at a very early hour. The faint and struggling beams of the morning sun fell upon the heavy hatchet which was soon to perform its dreaded functions, and sever three devoted heads in obedience to a law which man has no right to enact; for he cannot restore that life which he takes away; nor can he, as a reward for a great good, prolong the existence which he abridges for a great crime.

In that strange but too true book of Victor Hugo—*Le dernier jour d'un Condamné*—there is a most painful description of the last hours which the condemned malefactor in this life calls his own; and in that soul-stirring volume, every pang—every sentiment—every emotion is faithfully categorised with a minuteness and detail the perusal of which must be well calculated to prevent the commission of enormous crimes. Centuries of misery and anguish form the moments of that last day! And yet those three men—Fieschi, Pepin, and Morey, were awakened from a deep slumber, and suddenly informed that they had but a few minutes to live! And then those three men, instead of giving way to the influence of the terrible emotions which filled their bosoms, submitted to the task which the preliminary arrangements imposed upon the myrmidons of justice: viz., the pinioning of the arms, and the shaving off the hair behind the neck! Yes—they submitted to those operations with firmness and determination of manner; but old Morey's locks were not touched, because they were few, and thin, and gray!

Mistaken men! They had deemed that the cause of liberty was to be benefitted by assassination; and in their wrong view, and to work out their long cherished aims, they had not scrupled to concert and carry into execution those illegitimate measures which sent them to the scaffold. But they were not malefactors whom the vast crowd assembled gazed upon with loathing and horror: they had not plundered the orphan and the widow—they had not stained their hands with blood, for the purpose of robbing the midnight traveller: they aimed at the distinction—albeit a tarnished one—of regicides; and they exhibited upon the scaffold a firmness which only served the more to interest those, who believed them to be patriots, in their cause.

Old Morey, being dreadfully afflicted with the gout, was unable to ascend the steps of the scaffold, without assistance: but he spoke aloud to those who surrounded the *guillotine*, and assured them that his helplessness arose not through fear nor mental agitation. Fieschi and Pepin had smoked their pipes in the gaol, half an hour before they were ordered to mount the cart which carried them to the place of execution!

The very morning itself appeared to be congenial with the dreadful tragedy it rose to witness; and the chill that influenced the frames of the spectators, penetrated also to the inmost recesses of their souls.

A rumour had gone forth the previous evening that the criminals had but a few hours to live: but only one newspaper contained the announcement. The whole affair had been managed with a secresy and mystery which plainly demonstrated that the dynasty of France itself was not without its fears. Had the day of execution been previously advertised for any length of time, hundreds of thousands would have congregated to the fatal spot. As it was, the multitude was great: and many of the spectators were of the noblest and richest families in the metropolis; for this conspiracy, which might have operated so strongly upon the destinies of France, and which, in its partial eruption, had consigned to the tomb one of the greatest generals of the age, and one of the most lovely of her sex—together with many of their fellow-countrymen—had so forcefully worked upon the public mind, that, while the actual result was uncertain, the subject created an interest too extensive to be annihilated in a moment.

We cannot better conclude this short chapter, than by laying before the reader the following Ode, which we ourselves wrote and presented to his Majesty, the King of the French, at the head of a deputation of English gentlemen, on the Tuesday following the Friday on which the Conspirators were executed.

ODE ON THE EXECUTION OF FIESCHI.

The dark assassin is no more—
  His life has passed away;
And few his destiny deplore,
And none will shed a tear-drop o'er
  His decomposing clay.
Fiend—from his breast were banished all
  The pure ideas of heaven;
And to ensure the victim's fall
  The thoughts of Hell were given.
Strange sentiment of human pride
That made the wretch a homicide!

Methought, on earth was ne'er a bosom
  Where 'midst its evil entertwined,
There blooms no one unsullied blossom,
  No gentle feeling of the mind,
  By which the passions are refined,
And robbed of half their native wildness
Through this one single gleam of mildness;
Thus sun-lights o'er a battle shed
Their rays to gild the carnage dread.
Where Jealousy, Ambition, Guile,
  Hate, Envy, Ruthlessness, are found,
Methought some gentle passion's smile
Could moderate their rage awhile,
  And shine upon the clouds around.

But—no! As when the shades of night
Upon the ocean rest,
Without a single star to light,
Or make one lonely billow bright—
So was the traitor's breast!
Foul mark for Hist'ry's faithful page
Will be the name he bore;
Despised in ev'ry future age,
Contemned on ev'ry shore
Meanest of all the human race,
How can he meet his Maker's face?

Gallia! to thee no common tie
Connects thy King with sacred band:—
He and his blooming progeny
Were blest by Heaven's almighty hand,
And saved from death to rule the land
Whose sons will circle round the throne,
And make its int'rests all their own;
So that the star of France may gleam
On Orleans' house with fav'ring beam;
And her broad standard to the gale
Its triple dyes in glory show,
While music echoes from the vale,
And songs recite the welcome tale
How Philip crushed his coward foe!

To join the happy throng
Comes Peace, with laughing eye,
And hails the monarch as her guardian true
Britannia bears her flag along
Where Gallia's ensign flutters in the sky;
And Friendship twines a chain around the two.
In France henceforth may civil discord cease,
And shameless glory onward beckon those,
Who feel ignoble in the days of peace,
To quench their thirst for blood with foreign foes.
No standard waves o'er traitors' graves,
No flow'rets deck their tomb;
No moistened eye—no tender sigh
Speak sorrow for their doom.
But, undeplored, they lie beneath the sod,
Cursed by their fellow-men, rejected by their God!

CHAPTER LI.

THE MEMORABLE INTERVIEW BETWEEN CAPTAIN HORATIO CLARENCE WALSINGHAM AND MR. PETER MUGGINS.—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMPANY.

In order that no time might be lost in establishing the celebrated Universal Stone-expelling and Asphaltum-substituting Equitable Company upon a permanent foundation, its eminent originator, Captain Horatio Clarence Walshingham, sallied forth on the morning after the famous meeting which we described in a previous chapter, and bent his way towards the abode of Mr. Muggins.

Mr. Muggins embellished with his name and person, as well as with his extensive family of thirteen children, an eight-roomed house situate in Upper Stamford Street. He himself occupied the ground-floor and the attics. The first floor front, and the bed-room above, were let to a half-pay major in the army, who very often entertained a quiet little party of ten or a dozen superannuated military friends, upon which occasions a great many cigars were smoked and a considerable quantity of gin discussed. Indeed, had not the house been a private one, it would have suffered the penalties of an indictment for a nuisance: but the major paid his thirty shillings for rent, and his three-and-sixpence for coals, every Monday morning; and so Mr. Muggins said nothing about the noise and the tobacco-smoke. The back drawing-room and bed-room over-head, were tenanted by the Editor of a weekly newspaper, who was a very quiet man, although somehow or another, he never *could* write a line save under the influence of Barclay and Perkins's best draught stout, of which he generally imbibed a quart before he rose in the morning.

Stamford-street itself is the only respectable one in all that neighbourhood. It is principally habited by individuals having business in the City, or by authors; and the landlords of the houses for the most part are exceedingly prone to the letting of lodgings. All the servants in this street are acquainted with each-other; and thus the affairs of their respective masters and mistresses are no secret. The gentleman who beats his wife three or four times a day in order to remind her that he is sole lord and master in his own house; the surgeon, who has married two or three sisters, as fast as one died off; the lady and gentleman that ain't married, although they pass themselves off as man and wife; and the old bachelor, who has been a sad fellow in his day,—all these are the subjects of conversation and scandal amongst the local domestics. In the summer time, the young ladies sit in low gowns at the open drawing room windows, and with their feet on the balconies; and in the winter they stand, working or looking out into the street, at the same casements. The most remarkable individuals to be encountered in Stamford-street, besides its in-

habitants, are the fruiterer with his cart, the watercress woman with her shrill cry, the compositors and boys from Mr. Clowes's printing office, the policeman, and the watchman at night. But this sameness in the sphere of animated nature is occasionally varied by the tax-gatherer, who always *will* come just when there's nothing for him—the sheriff's-officer, in search of a candidate for the Bench—and the landlord, to claim those arrears which it is not always convenient to pay.

But to return to Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham. This gentleman knocked for about three quarters of a minute at Mr. Muggins' door, and was speedily admitted into the front parlour and to the presence of that individual, who had just dismissed his breakfast and the newspaper.

"Good morning, Mr. Muggins," was the Captain's amiable salutation: "how are you this morning?"

"Pretty tidy, thank'ee," returned Mr. Muggins. "Pray take a cheer."

"And how's Mrs. Muggins?" enquired the Captain with great feeling, as he sank into the proffered seat; "and all the family?"

"Hearty—quite hearty," replied Mr. Muggins. "But will you excuse me for a moment?"

"Oh! certainly," exclaimed the Captain; and Mr. Muggins pulled the bell with furious violence.

The summons was answered by a stout female domestic, with an exceedingly dirty apron round her waist, and a large whity-brown cap upon her head.

"Mary," cried Mr. Muggins, when the servant made her appearance; "I'm very uneasy about that there apple-tart. What *could* have become of it?"

"Lor, Sir;" returned the domestic, "it worn't bigger than yer thumb."

"I don't care, Mary," ejaculated Mr. Muggins, "how big it was; or how small it was. All I want to know is, what become of it?"

"Well, Sir," retorted the cook; "and pray did I say that there worn't any?"

"I didn't say you did, Mary," answered Mr. Muggins: "but if we could find out who took the apple-tart, we might p'rhaps diskiver the person which took the cold sassages t'other day."

"I never was accused of nothink afore this," began the domestic, now whimpering in order to avoid further interrogation; "and I've lived three year, come Lady's day, Mr. Muggins, in your service. And previous to that, I was seven year four months and a week with Captain Whistonbury and his lady; and they never missed—no, not the walley of a blessed farden—except the brandy as no one never *could* account for, and them bottles o'wine which I never could make out how they got away. But as for the broken wittles—I'd scorn the haction!"

And with all the dignity of conscious innocence, this much-injured woman wiped her eyes upon the corner of her apron, arranged her cap, and stared full and dauntlessly in the face of her accuser.

"Well—well, Mary," said Mr. Muggins, softening; "I dare say it's

all right—all right, I dare say. But mind that them scraps of cheese is eaten in the kitchen afore another one is cut."

Mary muttered a reply, and carried herself and her wrongs back again to her own subterranean regions.

"You will excuse me, my dear Sir," exclaimed Mr. Muggins, when his servant had disappeared; "but I'm obleeged to be very strict in my domestic ekkonommy. Would you believe it," he added in a low and mysterious voice, "that we've lost upwards of a bushel of coals within the last six weeks?"

"God bless me!" cried Captain Walsingham, forcing himself to sympathize in the misfortunes of the much-to-be-pitied Muggins: "you don't say so!"

"I do indeed, though," returned Mr. Muggins. "But now to business. I was raythor sleepy yesterday, and did not hear all you had to say about your Asphalte institootion."

Captain Walsingham repeated many of the strong and very convincing arguments he had used the day before; and Mr. Muggins was so struck, not to say affected, by that one which related to the fact of the Captain's being unable to stand upright upon the pavement at times—particularly after dinner—that he immediately resolved upon giving the Company his fullest support. Indeed, he (Mr. Muggins) had not unfrequently noticed a similar coincidence in respect to himself; and he could not do otherwise than deeply deplore the existence of so great and crying an evil.

"To be sure," cried Mr. Muggins; "I recollect perfectly well, when we had that glorious dinner at the *Waterspout and Trumpet* to celebrate the resignation of the Milk-and-Water Ministry and the triumph of the Small-Beer party in the House, that I couldn't stand any how upon the cursed paving-stones."

"No one ever can," indignantly cried Captain Walsingham, whose patriotic soul was fired with the idea of liberating his fellow-countrymen from so horrible a predicament. "The government must answer to a justly-incensed people for this state of things; and it would be strangely embarrassed how to do so, if I did not aid it in its difficulty by proposing a substitute for the crying nuisance."

"I see, I see," said Mr. Muggins, catching a spark of that fire which animated his companion. "And how much ready money shall we want to commence our operations?"

"The nominal capital is of course a million," ejaculated Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham: "but all that we actually require at first is about five hundred to a thousand pounds."

"And where the deuce is it to come from?" demanded Mr. Muggins.

"The capitalist who will advance the cash," continued the Captain, without noticing the question, "is to receive a *bonus* of five *per cent* more than any other person connected with the Company."

"Well—that is but fair," murmured Mr. Muggins.

"And he will have other perquisites and privileges, too numerous to mention," added Captain Walshingham. "For instance, such capitalist shall have the right of advancing as much money to the Company, at the above-mentioned rate, as he chooses. What do you think of *that?*"

"Admirable!" exclaimed Mr. Muggins.

"And he shall have it in his power," proceeded the Chairman, "to prevent the Company from applying to any other individual for loans, so long as he chooses to furnish them himself."

"Very eligible—very eligible, indeed!" cried Mr. Muggins. "Them is tempting offers."

"And the company shall bind itself to receive, through its treasurer, all the sums he may be desirous of investing in the concern," said the chairman: "and you may depend upon it, that I will use my influence to induce the board of directors to accept of as large a loan as such capitalist may wish to advance. Nay, more—we will draw up a deed, by virtue of which the said capitalist shall have it in his power to *insist* upon the Company's receiving the loans."

"You know my capital is all locked up," began Mr. Muggins, whom these advantageous proffers greatly interested.

"And in order to accommodate such capitalist," hastily continued Captain Walsingham, "the money or monies, to be furnished, shall be advanced upon bills; and, what is more—the Company shall pay for the stamps!"

The annals of Joint Stock Companies (even in the panic year) do not furnish such a remarkable instance of liberality and kindness on the part of any of those vast public enterprises which reflect so much honour upon the nation, as this which it is now our pleasure and our pride to put upon record. Even Mr. Muggins himself was astonished at the generosity of the Chairman; and the production of the spirit-stand, with two small glasses, was the most emphatic proof of his gratitude which he could at the moment possibly think of.

"Mary," said he, for an instant relaping into domestic affairs, "some one has been at that gin-decanter—I know they have."

"Lor, Sir!" cried the domestic; "who *could* have been at it? Missus don't drink sperets of a mornin'; and you know I wouldn't touch a drop to save my existence."

Mr. Muggins swore that he did not know any such thing; and he rapped out a good number of oaths to support his assertion.

"I'm blest if ever I touched it," cried the unfortunate cook. "I'd scorn to do sich a thing."

She, however, had the prudence and presence of mind to stand as far off from her master as possible, her breath having a very unpleasant predilection to exhale certain spirituous odours at that time in the morning, as indeed it also did throughout the day.

"Well, Mary," returned Mr. Muggins, "it's no use talking nor persisting to the contrairy, 'cos some one *has* been to them there bottles. But we won't say no more about it now: I dare say I shall find out the thief afore long, for I'm blowed if I don't pison something, if things continues to go on in this sort o'way."

The cook *did* intimate, as she bounced out of the room, that her master might proceed upon a visit, as soon as he liked and for anything that she cared, to his Satanic Majesty: but she was not precisely understood by Mr. Muggins: and so her permission to undertake this journey was not noticed on the part of him for whose behoof it was expressed.

"Taste this rum," said Mr. Muggins; and he filled two wine glasses with the juice of Jamaica's choicest production.

"Excellent!" cried the Captain, smacking his lips, and setting down the glass which he had emptied.

"Yes—it isn't bad," said Mr. Muggins. "But—I tell you what—an idea has entered my head."

"No!" ejaculated the Captain, with an affectation of the deepest astonishment.

"Honour bright!" exclaimed Mr. Muggins; and he bestowed a most sapient and cognoscent wink upon his companion.

"Well, what is it, now?" demanded the eminent Chairman: "something good, *I* dare say!"

"Why—I don't mind," began Mr. Muggins, speaking very deliberately, as he unfolded his plan, and re-filled the glasses with equal caution,—"I don't mind if I let you have a little advance—a small loan, you know—myself!"

"Muggins," said Captain Walsingham, assuming a most solemn expression of countenance,—"Muggins, I am your friend. I esteem you. I like you. I admire you. You are a man of the world, Muggins. Give me your hand."

And the hand of Mr. Muggins was thereupon clasped in the hand of Captain Walsingham. It was thus that those great men demonstrated their friendship for each other; and if we do but change the name of Muggins into Pythias, and Walsingham into Damon, we shall see the ancient legend realized in modern times!

By one of those strange coincidences which not unfrequently characterize mundane affairs, Captain Walsingham had a bill for five hundred pounds already drawn out upon the proper stamp, in his pocket. This little incident excited a great deal of laughter between the two gentlemen, on account of the strangeness of it; as it was not for a moment to be supposed that the result of the conference could have been anticipated by either.

"Odd—wasn't it?" observed the Captain.

"Very," returned Mr. Muggins.

"Just the amount, perhaps," said the Chairman.

"Exactly!" exclaimed the capitalist.

"You'll accept it, then?" enquired the Captain.

"On the conditions proposed," was the reply.

"Fire away, then," jocosely urged the gallant Captain Walsingham.

"Here's the ink-stand," said Mr. Muggins, reaching one from the mantel-piece: "but where's the pen?"—and he gave another furious pull at the bell.

"Mary's coming," said Captain Walsingham, perceiving that Mr. Muggins was about to repeat the summons with additional violence.

"Mary," cried Mr. Muggins, as the cook entered the room; "there was a pen in this ink-stand only an hour ago!"

"I'm sure I haven't touched it," cried the servant.

"Who has, then?" demanded Mr. Muggins, in a tone and a manner which showed that he treated the affair with a little more seriousness than perhaps it really deserved.

"Lor, Sir, how do I know?" returned the cook. "There's Miss Anna-Maria has been in here this morning; and Miss Arabella was writing out the coal-bills last night. I know Hester-Henrietta is very fond of playing with the pens; and Master Matthew Julius always *does* take 'em."

"Bring another, then," cried Mr. Muggins; and when the pen was brought, he declared that he was anything but satisfied about that apple-tart, and that nothing should persuade him that no one had been to the gin-decanter. He then muttered something about a bushel of coals, and having motioned his servant out of the room, accepted the bill.

On the following morning Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham succeeded in discounting the acceptance of Mr. Peter Muggins in the City; and his first care was to treat himself with a bason of turtle-soup and a glass of iced punch at Birch's. He then purchased a watch at Mr. Cox Savory's, and a ring of Messieurs Griffin and Hyam's; and having thus ministered to his own necessities, he proceeded to attend to those of the Company. He began by hiring a splendid set of offices in Bartholomew-lane, and forthwith purchased desks, tables, and chairs to place in them. He procured a painter, who painted the words "PUBLIC OFFICE" upon one door; "WAITING ROOM" upon another; and "BOARD ROOM" upon a third. He then hired three individuals, who, under the denomination of Clerks, were to sit at a desk in the Public Office, chatter and read the newspaper when they were alone, and apply themselves like madmen to three great books with clasps when a stranger came in. A servant in blue livery, with white buttons, was also engaged to lounge about in the passage outside the entrance door which led to the offices; and a man, with printed prospectuses to give away, was stationed in the street. A general meeting of the Directors was then called and advertised, to discuss the business of the Company; but as there was as yet no business to occupy their attention, they discussed a copious luncheon instead.

In a few days, a paragraph was drawn up by the excellent Chairman, and inserted (upon payment) in one or two of those daily papers which do not put the word "Advertisement" at the beginning; and this paragraph stated that they (the papers) were informed upon the best authority that the materials which composed the Asphaltum were derived from Asiatic sources; whereupon Mr. Snuffery, as treasurer and secretary, wrote a letter to all the journals to contradict this report; and as the said letters were inserted for nothing, the Company gained its aim in obtaining publicity at the least possible expense.

Another paragraph, tending to show that the Asphaltum would never be applied to universal use, was then paid for and inserted in the *Morning Teapot;* and at this the Company pretended to be in the most direful wrath; so much so, that Messieurs Rumrig and Sharp, the Company's solicitors, were instructed to bring an action against the aforesaid *Morning Teapot;* but, after a great deal of public display, letter-writing, pamphleteering, fending and proving, that eminent legal firm declared it was not necessary to proceed with the suit; and so the whole business was announced to have been arranged in the most amicable manner possible.

A few shares were next issued, and private friends were sent round to purchase up these shares at a *premium;* so that the transaction took wind, and the Company succeeded in getting itself blamed for allowing only the acquaintances of the Directors to profit by the speculation. The demand for shares was therefore immediate and great; and when a piece of the pavement fronting the house in which the offices of the Company were situate, was robbed of its stone and subjected to the process of the Asphalte, the enthusiasm and credulity of the public in favour of this great institution knew no bounds. A grand dinner was given by the Directors at the *City of London Tavern;* and Mr. Muggins was generously permitted by the worthy Chairman to advance the Company another five hundred pounds.

Of course Captain Walsingham could no longer remain in the three-pair back, which he had formerly occupied in the New Cut. But Mr. Muggins had a ready-furnished house of his own in Broad-street, to let; and into this the eminent Chairman of the Universal Stone-expelling and Asphalte-substituting Equitable Company speedily removed. With his usual prudence, he did not think it necessary to intimate to the public that he had just emerged from so vulgar a region as the New Cut: he accordingly had his arrival in town, from Walsingham Hall, Staffordshire, duly inserted in the fashionable columns of the *Morning Post*, and thence copied into the evening papers.

CHAPTER LII.

THE PARTICULARS OF A PUBLIC MEETING HOLDEN IN PARIS.—RESOLUTIONS AND ANECDOTES.—MR. SCUTTLE RECEIVES A LETTER FROM HIS NIECE.

Every one, who visits or resides in Paris, is acquainted with the Circulating-library in the Rue Neuve Saint Augustin, which was long presided over by the immortal M. Bennis. The principal clerk in this establishment, as we have before stated, was Mr. Matthew Tunks; and with him must we now make our readers more intimately acquainted.

A few days after the execution of Fieschi, Pepin, and Morey, an advertisement appeared in the *Paris Advertiser* newspaper, stating that "a meeting of the English and American residents in Paris would be holden at the Library, to present to his Majesty, the King of the French, an address congratulatory on the triumph he had obtained over his secret enemies." On the important morning, which was so happily destined to witness the effects of the united talent of England and America, Mr. Tunks rose an hour earlier than usual, and hastened to the News-room, in which the meeting was to be held, for the purpose of superintending the preparations. Great indeed was Mr. Tunks upon this occasion; and terrible was the awe with which he was surveyed by the old porter and the small boy who were occupied in sweeping out the apartment.

"Put them papers there," cried Mr. Matthew Tunks; and as the small boy did not exactly understand in which spot he was to deposit the journals he held in his hand, Mr. Tunks kindly explained himself more fully by kicking him towards it: "and then go and borrow a harm-chair from the porter's lodge for the President. Don't offer no apologies for your idleness—I won't except none."

When these orders were obeyed with the utmost correctness and despatch, Mr. Matthew Tunks put a finishing stroke to his extensive preparations and arrangements, by kicking the small boy out of the room, with a savage injunction not to show his nose there again till he was called for. Mr. Tunks then proceeded to the Café Virginie over the way, where he refreshed himself with a mutton chop and a pint of Macon, the price of which he charged against his employer, under the head of "Extras and incidental expenses."

At about eleven o'clock Mr. Matthew Tunks was summoned by the porter, back again to the Library, as the members of the meeting had begun to assemble. Sir Robert Still had made his appearance in a suit of uniform, the exact country to which it belonged existing no where but in the excellent gentleman's own brain; and his brother, in another disguise to which the same remark might apply, speedily followed him. Then came Mr. Beechy, the Counsel to the English Embassy; and he was followed by no less a person than Mr. Hook Walker, whom it had struck that at such an extensive meeting of his acquaintances, invitations to dinner would be doubtless plentiful. In the course of a few minutes Mr. Pickwick, attended by Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Winkle, was ushered into the room; and when the door again opened, it admitted the form of Mr. Septimus Chitty, the poet. Mr. Kallaway and Mr. Scuttle condescended to honour the meeting with their presence; and Mr Lipman and Mr. Jopling also vouchsafed the light of their countenances on so important an occasion. Add to these illustrious names a variety of others too numerous to mention, and the splendour of the scene can be readily imagined.

As Mr. Bennis himself was not present, Mr. Matthew Tunks undertook to open the business of the meeting. Mr. Tunks begged to assure the gentlemen present, that he was only a clerk in that establishment where they had met (a fact with which they were all previously acquainted), but that his heart glowed with enthusiasm in the cause of the great man who at that moment sate upon the French throne. Mr. Tunks proceeded to say that he was an Englishman—it was true—and he was proud of it—

"An' wery proud the English is o' you," interrupted a voice from the lower end of the room.

Mr. Tunks acknowledged the compliment by a bow, and assured the meeting that he was born a true Englishman—that his father was an Englishman—and his great grandfather before him; and he challenged any man present to deny it if he could. But as no one undertook the task of doing so, Mr. Tunks informed the meeting that they had better elect a Chairman; and as he had thus opened the business in a manner so highly satisfactory and clear, he sate down amidst a murmur of applause.

"Pickvick in the cheer! Hooray for Pickvick!" cried the same voice which had before interrupted the business of the meeting; and a hat with a gold band was tossed up to the ceiling by some one in a crowd of individuals at the bottom of the room.

"Pickwick in the chair!" roared Messieurs Lipman and Jopling.

"Pickwick for ever! That's the system!" shouted Mr. Hook Walker."

"Pickwick *pro semper!* Pickwick for ever!" echoed Mr. Septimus Chitty; and Mr. Pickwick was thrust into the seat of honour by his officious friends, to the great detriment of his legs and toes which were kicked and trampled on as his supporters flung him from one to the other till he reached the arm-chair.

"Pickvick for president!" shouted the voice before alluded to; "that ain't no gammon, as the lady said to the pork butcher ven he vould'nt give her the right piece o' bacon."

"Silence!" shouted Mr. Matthew Tunks, with dignity.

"Aye — pray do now — you'll only wex us if you does'nt maintain order," returned the voice.

Mr. Pickwick, having recovered breath, rose to address the meeting. He had the honour of being elected president of a vast assemblage of English and Americans—

"Americans and English," suggested a Kentuckian, who was present.

Mr. Pickwick would say, then, since it pleased the gentleman who had stopped him, Americans and English; but, for his part—

"English and Americans," shouted Mr. Lipman. "D—n me, let's have the English first."

"So I say," roared Mr. Jopling.

Mr. Pickwick, in order to compromise the matter in the most amicable way, declared that he would vary the terms, by putting each nation first alternately; an arrangement to which the Kentuckian immediately assented. Mr. Pickwick proceeded to say that he was proud of the honour of presiding at that meeting of the first English and Americans in Paris; and that as the Americans and the English had unanimously called him to that chair, he should do his best to deserve the good opinion of the English and Americans. (*Hear! hear!*) He was a loyal son of Albion, as many present might be loyal sons of Nashville, Vermont, Ohio, or Mississippi; and he would tell those present, whether they were English or Americans — Americans or English — that they were acting a noble part in meeting that day, for the purpose of congratulating the King of the French on his escape from treason and assassination! He would add — and his soul was fired as he made the observation—

At this moment, the worthy Chairman reached forth his right arm to assist the force of his eloquence by the powers of action, and his fist came in immediate contact with Mr. Winkle's nose, that gentleman's countenance being stuck prominently forward, in order that his ears might the more easily drink in every word of his great leader's luminous discourse.

Having begged his friend's pardon, Mr. Pickwick continued to observe that he was proud to occupy the chair upon such an occa-

sion; and he called upon those, Americans and English, and English and Americans, by whom he was surrounded, to join him in his determination to express his abhorrence of the cowardly attempt upon his Majesty's life, in language the strongest that could be conceived. (*Hear ! hear !*)

Sir Robert Still proposed the first resolution, to the effect "that Mr. Matthew Tunks be elected honorary secretary to that meeting." This resolution was seconded by Mr. Hook Walker, and carried unanimously; it being pretty generally known that Mr. Tunks wrote a tolerably good hand, with the exception of the spelling.

Mr. Snodgrass rose to propose the second resolution, which, after some preliminary remarks, he read from a slip of paper as follows: "that this meeting coincides with popular opinion, in expressing the deepest abhorrence at the dastardly attack upon the life of the King of the French." This resolution, being supported by Mr. Septimus Chitty, was carried unanimously.

Mr. Hook Walker proposed the third resolution, "that it was a part of the system of that meeting to wish his Majesty a thousand such lucky escapes." Mr. Tupman, having entered somewhat elaborately upon the love he bore the Queen and the princesses, and indeed all the French ladies in general, seconded this resolution, which was also adopted.

Mr. Warrington Stokes, of the Backwoods of Wolkentoggins-town, Virginia county, proposed, on the part of the Americans, the fourth resolution; "that the American Presidents in Paris begged to express the heart-felt wishes of all the inhabitants of the United States, for the prosperity of Mr. Louis Philippe, Mrs. Orleans, and all the Masters and Misses Orleans." This resolution was opposed by Sir Robert Still, on the ground of its not being expressed in language conformable to the usages of the country. The proper terms were thererore substituted, and the measure was finally carried unanimously.

A gentleman, attired in that which was at first mistaken for an uniform, now stepped forward from amongst the group at the lower end of the room, mounted upon a chair, and addressed the meeting as follows:—"Gen'lemen, in perposing the fifth ressylootion, allow me to make a few wery simple ob'serwations to this amiable company. I ain't no great talker; but them as talks little does much; vich vos the remark made by the sogers ven they bagginetted the chaps as met at Brummagem to take their grievances into consideration. You seem stuck jist here, for a fifth ressylootion; 'cos I'm blowed if the four fust is'nt all the same; an' the only way we can get ourselves out o' the scrape is by some wery desperate means, as the gen'leman said ven he set his house a fire just afore quarter-day 'cos he could'nt pay his rent. It vould'nt look wery creditable to sich a enlightened ass-embly as this here, to present a address to the King, and hear him say, 'Vy, there ain't nothin' in it, as the nobleman observed to the vaiter:'—and I'll jist tell you how that vos. A nobleman come to a inn, and wery hungry he where, to be sure.—'Vaiter,' says he, 'vot ha' you got for dinner, old feller?'—'Anything your lordship likes,' says the vaiter.—'Vell, then,' says his lordship, 'get me a beef-steak and oyster sarce.'—'Ain't got no steaks, my lord,' says the vaiter.—'Vell,

then,' returns the nobleman, 'a weal cutlet.'—'Nor no weal cutlet,' says the vaiter.—'A mutton-chop, then,' says his lordship.'—'Nor no chops,' vos the reply.—'Vy, vot a house this is, to be sure!' exclaims the nobleman: 'you ain't got nothin' in it.'—'Yes, ve has,' says the vaiter; 'plenty.'—'Vot is it, then?' asks his lordship.—'A execution,' vos the answer. —So I perpose, gen'lemen, vith sich a example as that there afore our eyes, that ve adopts this here ressylootion; 'that this wery amiable meetin' havin' four times expressed its sorrow at your majesty's haccident, does hereby per-rogue itself till they shoots at your majesty the next time.' Take that there down, Mister Secreterry; an' don't sit gaping there: it's wery unwholesome, as the man vich vos goin' to be hanged observd ven they offered him a drop o' gin."

Surprise had at first taken away all power of utterance from the illustrious Mr. Pickwick, when he recognized in the individual who stepped forward to propose the fifth resolution, his own faithful valet, Mr. Samuel Weller. But when he perceived that the enlightened assembly listened to that gentleman with a considerable degree of interest, he did not think it worth while to interrupt him, although he shortly recovered his lost powers of speech.

"I oppose this resolution as ridiculous in the extreme," ejaculated Sir Robert Still; "and I am sure that gentleman will withdraw it."

Mr. Samuel Weller was "wery sure he vould not;" and having thus made up his mind, he cocked his hat gracefully over his right ear, and stared Sir Robert Still out of countenance.

"Why—he is but a servant," cried Sir Robert, as his eye caught sight of the hat with the gold-lace band; "and in livery too!"

"Vell, I vears Pickvick's livery," retorted Mr. Weller; "but I 'm blowed if you knows whose you vears."

Sir Robert Still pretended not to hear this last observation; so he affected to whisper to Mr. Matthew Tunks, who was making a fair copy of the resolutions already voted. Mr. Tupman was however despatched by Mr. Pickwick to remonstrate with Mr. Weller; and after a great deal of difficulty, Sam was prevailed upon to withdraw his motion.

"But it's a wery great sacrifice as I make to private feelings," observed Mr. Weller to the meeting, when he had intimated his intention of not persisting in his resolution, in a neat speech; "a wery great sacrifice, indeed, as the minister observed ven he vos obleeged to sign the order for transportin' a young lady as he vos attached to;"—and, having thus expressed himself, Mr. Weller alighted from the chair, and withdrew from the gaze of the members of the meeting, by sheltering himself behind two or three individuals near whom he was standing.

"Who proposes the fifth resolution?" enquired Mr. Matthew Tunks.

"I!" ejaculated Mr. Septimus Chitty; "and vote that the address be written in verse—*carminibus*."

"No—in Latin!" cried Mr. Kallaway, probably because he did not understand the language himself, and therefore admired it much more than the one he *could* comprehend.

"I oppose both measures," said Mr. Jopling. "Give me the right down regular English—the vernacular, I call it."

"Eh! so I say," assented Mr. Lipman: "the vernacular is the name I give to English gin as well as to the English language."

Mr. Chitty was over-ruled by this weight of argument; and Sir Robert Still proposed the fifth resolution; "that twelve members of the meeting be voted as a Committee to draw up the address to his Majesty." Mr. Scuttle seconded this motion, Mr. Winkle supported it, Mr. Hook Walker spoke in favour of it, and Messieurs Lipman and Jopling shouted for it. It was therefore adopted without much opposition on the part of Mr. Chitty's friends.

The members of the Committee were then elected; and if the reader have any curiosity to know who they were, let him attentively peruse the annexed list:—

SAMUEL PICKWICK, ESQ., *Chairman.*
SIR ROBERT STILL.
MR. WARRINGTON STOKES, *of Wolkentoggins-town.*
TRACY TUPMAN, ESQ.
SEPTIMUS CHITTY, ESQ.
HOOK WALKER, ESQ.
AUGUSTUS SNODGRASS, ESQ.
NATHANIEL WINKLE, ESQ.
CHARLES BEECHY, ESQ.
JEREMIAH SCUTTLE, ESQ.
CAPTAIN STILL.
MR. MATTHEW TUNKS, *Secretary.*

This matter having been arranged to the satisfaction of those who were upon the Committee, and to the ineffable disgust of those who were not, the Secretary was desired to read the resolutions; a request with which he complied in these terms:—

"I. Resolved, that Mr. Matthew Tunks be elected an honourable Secretary to the meeting.

"II. Resolved, that this meeting circumscribes popular opinion, in compressing the deepest abhorrence at the masterly attack upon the life of the King of the French.

"III. Resolved, that the American presidents in Paris impress the artful wishes of all the inhabitants of the benighted states for the prosperity of his Majesty Louis Philippe, his august spouse, and royal children.

"IV. Resolved, that it is a part of the system of this meeting to wish his Majesty may have a thousand such opportunities of escape.

"V. Resolved, that twelve members of this meeting be voted to draw up a redress to his Majesty."

"There are one or two errors," observed Mr. Pickwick, when Mr. Matthew Tunks had read the resolutions just as he himself had taken them down; "but they don't much matter."

"And mine was the third resolution," exclaimed Mr. Hook Walker: "you have put it down as the fourth."

"It has a better effect there," suggested Mr. Tunks; "although, indeed, it would do anywhere."

"God knows it would," murmured Mr. Kallaway.

The thanks of the meeting were then voted to Mr. Pickwick, and the members separated, it having been agreed that the Committee should assemble in a private room attached to the Library, on the following day, and draw up the address.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick to his faithful domestic, when they had once more arrived at their own lodgings, "I'll give you a piece of advice."

"That's vot the mysterious stranger remarked to the landlord o' the inn, Sir," returned Mr. Weller.

"Well, Sam, you shall tell me your story afterwards," continued Mr. Pickwick: "in the meantime listen to what I am going to say to you."

"Hope it ain't a blowin' up, Sir," interrupted Mr. Weller; "'cos that's bad for the constitootion."

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, solemnly, "I must request that you do not interfere at public meetings in future—particularly where I may be: it is neither becoming nor decent."

"Beg pardon, Sir," exclaimed Mr. Weller; "but I thought as how ve vos all ekal in this here country."

"Not in that respect, Sam," returned Mr. Pickwick. "There is a proper spirit of democracy, but it has not yet arrived to the extent you mention."

"Your adwice is done, Sir?" enquired Mr. Weller.

"Quite, Sam," was the answer; "and I hope you will profit by it."

"I rayther think I shall, Sir," answered Mr. Weller; "but if it's agreeable, Sir, I'll jist tell you the annygoat as I alluded to ven you commenced your little bit o' adwice."

"Very well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick; "I am attending to you."

"Vonce upon a time, Sir," began Mr. Weller, "I heerd talk of a chap as goes to a inn; and a wery mysterious kind o' feller he vos. His countenance vos down-cast, as the sayin' is; and his eyes had a raythe extr'ordinary ex-pression: altogether he vos a regular rum un. So he valks straight up to the landlord, an' he says, says he, 'Master, I ain't a-got no money; but if so be you'll give me my grub and a bed, I'll tell you a secret as is vorth knowin' any how.'—'Vill you raly?' says the landlord, 'and pray vot is the secret?'—'No, no,' says the stranger; 'that's not my vay o' goin' to vork. You fulfil your part o' the agreement fust, and then I'll accomplish mine. Fair play 's a jewel, as von king o' France said ven he dethroned t'other.'—'I've a blessed great mind to try,' says the landlord, musin' wery audibly.—'Do,' says the stranger.—'I vill,' says the landlord: an' so the bargin vos struck upon the spot. Vell, Sir, the landlord gived the gen'leman a slap-up dinner, a capital bed, and a wery excellent breakfast, an' all on the condition that the secret vos to be told afore the gen'leman vent away. The landlord never slept a vink the whole blessed night, 'cos his thoughts vos so troubled vith the idea o 'the secret as vould make his fortune. So the next mornin' come, as I said, or meant to say ven I explained how the landlord gived the gen'leman his breakfast, an' the fatal moment come also.—'Hope you've been vell treated, Sir; says the landlord.—'Wery vell,' vos the reply; 'so make out your bill, receipt it, an' I'll keep my vord

vith you.'—The landlord did as he vos desired; and ven the gen'leman had the bill safe in his pocket, he says, 'This is the wery important secret as ull do you so much good ven the time comes for you to profit by it. If so be you ever goes to the treadmill, try and get the place next to the vall: 'tis easier vorkin' there.' And vith them vords, off goes the gen'leman and never vos seen or heerd on artervards."

"Very extraordinary, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick: "but it strikes me that the gentleman was nothing more than a swindler, and that *that* was the reason he was never heard of again."

"Ah! I shouldn't vonder, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, with a most mysterious shake of the head: and scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when the front door bell rang violently.

Mr. Weller hastened to obey the summons, and in a few moments Mr. Scuttle was ushered into the room where Mr. Pickwick was seated.

"Ah! you are all alone, I see," exclaimed Mr. Scuttle, as he tumbled into a chair: "where are Tupman and the others?"

"They did not return from the meeting with me," answered Mr. Pickwick. "I fancy that they went to take a stroll with Kallaway and Walker."

"I longed so to see you," continued Mr. Scuttle, "for I could'nt speak a word with you on private business at that odious meeting. Only think—I have made it up with Sophia."

"With Mrs. Siffkin?" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick.

"Exactly," answered Mr. Scuttle. "I was so overjoyed with the news I received this morning, that when I was going to pay my baker his bill, I handed him his own receipt and threw the bank note I meant to offer him for change, into the fire."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! yes," said Mr. Scuttle; "Sophia has written me such a kind letter, and she has sent me a parcel of such beautiful things from the first houses in London. There's a box of Grimstone's eye-snuff—some of Sharp's British Cerates—a Yorkshire ham—a diamond ring—a haunch of venison—and half a dozen bottles of the Essence of Eglantine."

"What's that?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, perfectly astonished at the singular category of presents just enumerated.

"What is the Eglantine?" cried Mr. Scuttle: "why, the most beautiful scent in the world. It is made by a famous chemist of the name of White, on Cornhill. I thought every one had heard of the Eglantine."

"I recollect that I have, now you mention it," remarked Mr. Pickwick. "But—God bless me, Scuttle—what have you been doing to yourself?" and Mr. Pickwick pointed to Mr. Scuttle's legs, on one of which there was a black silk stocking, and on the other a worsted one.

"This cursed absence of mind!" ejaculated Mr. Scuttle: "I wish she had sent something to cure *that*;" and with these words, the old gentleman took his departure, to return home and repair his toilet, and then sally forth to relate his good news to his other friends.

Mr. Pickwick did not feel in a humour to venture abroad again for the remainder of the day: he accordingly seated himself by a cheerful

fire; and having selected a volume of tales from some books which he had lately purchased, he wiled away his time in the perusal of the terrible narrative which will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LIII.

ST. AUBYN.—A TALE.

ANGELE DE FLORVILLE.—THE PRIEST.—THE FATAL BOUDOIR.—SECOND VISIT TO PERE LA CHAISE.—THE INTERVIEW.

SHORTLY after the coronation of the emperor Napoleon and his consort Josephine,—when Europe was filled with the fame of the mighty victor,—when the Tuileries echoed to the glad sounds of music,—and when all Paris was gaiety and joy,—the Marquis de Florville arrived at his town residence in the Chaussée d'Antin. But he did not return to Paris alone. Besides the long cavalcade of dependants and domestics that followed in his train, he was accompanied by one whom he intended to present to his friends in the metropolis of France, with the pride of a man who, having visited distant climes, brings back some precious gem or exotic plant as an earnest of his travel. And the costly jewel, which the Marquis treasured up so fondly—the rare exotic flower which he was so anxious to introduce to his noble acquaintances, in order to receive their anticipated congratulations, was his beauteous bride! She was not of a distinguished family; but her loveliness was worth a thousand mouldering escutcheons. She was not wealthy in dower; but the possession of her charms rendered her husband a hundred times more happy than he would have been had she brought him the riches of Golconda as her marriage-portion. Oh! so lovely was she—that fair flower, fresh and blooming from the country—so perfect in every beauty, and in every grace,—so symmetrical, and yet so voluptuous in form—so modest, and yet so full of passion—so retiring, and yet so fascinating—so reserved, and yet so bewitching—that for her might Anthony have lost the world a second time!

And she was gay and sprightly—Oh! as gay as the butterflies which she had left behind her in her father's gardens; and her dark blue eyes were lit up with an expression of the most unfeigned delight, when the carriage rolled under the spacious arch-way which conducted her into the noble hotel she was thenceforth to call her own home. But what was her delight, when the Marquis, gallantly taking his fair wife's hand and gently pressing it, led her to a suite of apartments fitted up in the most attractive style which luxury and wealth could have accomplished, and bade her consider that miniature palace as her own. The volatile Marchioness ran from mirror to mirror—from the china-vase filled with sweet flowers, to the splendid toilette-table—from the window to the door—and from one object of curiosity to another, till she was literally fatigued before her interest had subsided.

The Marquis, who had long passed the meridian of his years, sate upon a Turkish ottoman, and surveyed with the most heartfelt plea-

sure the happiness of his young wife; for he was kindness itself—that venerable nobleman; and all his hopes, affections, and joys were now centered in the fair being whom he had raised from a condition of comparative poverty to one of affluence and rank. And the old Marquis was fully recompensed for all he had done for his lovely bride, by the tender kiss which she imprinted upon his forehead. Oh! he was so happy then — the venerable nobleman — with his adored wife — his young, his innocent, his beauteous Angèle — the veriest demon upon earth, or in the depths of hell, could not have robbed him of the treasure he prized so much!

As the Marquis had foreseen, his wife soon became the admiration of all Paris; and when she was introduced at court, her husband was complimented by the Emperor on the excellence of his choice.

"Madam," said the great man to the blushing Angèle, "you will be the cause of dissension amongst us; for we shall all be too envious of your husband's good fortune to remain friends with him long.

"Your Majesty does us both too much honour," was the timid and bashful reply; and the imperial hero thought of the fair countenance of Angèle many times during that evening.

The sensation that Madame de Florville created in the fashionable world of Paris was too great to subside in a moment; and he was the happiest cavalier who was fortunate enough to obtain her hand for a single dance. But French society at that period enjoyed the most unbridled licence; and there was scarcely a married lady without her lover. The female friends of the Marchioness, with that idiosyncracy, so common amongst women, which urges them to endeavour to reduce all others to a level with themselves, and to destroy the existence of virtue in order to avoid the perils of contrast—these ladies soon assailed the ears of the innocent wife of a kind old man, with their insidious tales, and poured forth their baneful advice with as much freedom as if they were teaching moral lessons. But the Marchioness was proof against every wile and every allurement; and, with all the unsophisticated candour of her mind, she made her husband the confidant of her most trifling secrets. And then how happy was he—the doting de Florville!—and he felt assured that his beloved wife would escape all the contamination of that society in which she was compelled, by the exigences of her exalted station, to move.

Time wore on—a year passed rapidly away—and the Marquis became more and more attached to Angèle, as each day developed some new grace in a mind so well calculated to inspire esteem and love. The frail beauties of Paris, finding that their lessons were thrown away upon one who was too guileless to understand even half their insinuations, speedily ceased to torment her; and thus did her very virtue make her many enemies.

One of the chief objects which had induced the Marquis de Florville to fix his abode in Paris, was the hope of obtaining a place which had long been promised him about the person of the Emperor, when Napoleon was only First Consul. The boon was at length granted; and one of the first duties of the high appointment thus conferred, compelled the Marquis to absent himself a short time from Paris, and hasten to the south of France.

"You may entrust your fair wife to ourselves," said the Empress Josephine, when the Marquis took his leave of their Majesties: "her welfare shall be our care."

The Marquis expressed his thanks, and departed, with only one regret; viz., that Angèle could not accompany him. But the wish of the first lady in Europe was a law to all around her; and he did not for a moment give the slightest sign of dissatisfaction. He therefore bade adieu to his wife with a forced smile, and promised to return to her as speedily as possible.

Angèle wept bitterly when she was left alone in the spacious mansion; and not one of the numerous dependants, who were ever ready to obey her slightest wish—and not one of the many, many ladies in the wide circle of fashion, who envied her beauty and her rank—no, not one was so wretched as the Marchioness de Florville, when her husband's carriage rolled away from the door of the hotel.

Some weeks passed away; and every other morning brought a letter to Angèle; and the mail of every other evening bore one to Lyons, whither her husband was gone. But the business, upon which the Marquis had been despatched, detained him longer than he had anticipated; and by the increased tenderness of his letters, did he hope to make up for the disappointment which he knew his beloved Angèle experienced on account of his protracted absence.

One morning, Angèle received a letter from her husband in which he informed her that new delays had arisen; and that his nephew, the Count de Vans-la-Grace, would be the bearer of a more explicit communication from him in a few days, as that nobleman had been despatched by his relative to Paris by a circuitous route, with documents of importance for the Emperor.

"I eagerly seize this opportunity," added the kind Marquis in his short but affecting letter, "of introducing a worthy and excellent young man to my beloved Angèle. His father was my own brother, and was killed by my side in battle. You can imagine whether I feel interested in the only relict of that much-regretted brother."

Angèle had never seen the Count de Vans-la-Grace; but she had heard much of him. He had joined the army when very young, and his regiment was stationed at Lyons. As it was a species of military mission upon which the Marquis had been sent to that city, he had easily procured the services of his nephew as *aid-de-camp;* and the old nobleman seized the first opportunity of despatching the aspiring Count to Paris on an important affair, in order that he might attract the notice of the Emperor. Angèle therefore awaited his arrival with anxiety. She was desirous of being acquainted with a relative whom her husband loved; nor less was she interested in the promised epistle of which he was to be the bearer.

How slowly passes the time, when we are expecting the arrival of good news, or of that which will be agreeable to us: but how fleet and fast it glides away, when evils await us at a future day. Nearly a week elapsed; and at length a domestic informed the Marchioness that a stranger was desirous of speaking with her.

"A stranger?" thought Angèle: "that cannot be he! The Count would not have thus announced himself."

But fearful of denying herself to any one, lest it should really prove to be M. de Vans-la-Grace, the Marchioness ordered the visitor to be admitted to her presence; and as she was uncertain who it was, she hastened to receive him in an apartment which did not belong to her own private *suite*.

In the course of a few minutes, the visitor was shown into the room. He was a young man of about four-and-twenty, with a handsome but melancholy cast of features, a dark black eye which spoke only the language of plaintiveness, and a downcast manner about him that seemed to indicate embarrassment. Add to this sombre appearance, the dark vesture, without the gown, of a priest; and it cannot be wondered at if Angèle gave an involuntary start as the stranger entered the room.

The most chaste imagination pictures to itself its ideas of one who is expected, and who has never been seen before; and Angèle had fancied that a gay, sprightly, and dashing soldier was about to break upon her sight. Her feeling was therefore one of disappointment as she desired the stranger, in a cold and reserved tone, to be seated.

"Madame de Florville will pardon me," began the stranger in a voice which was harmonious and pleasing, "if I have thus boldly intruded myself upon her presence—"

"Have I the honour of being addressed by Monsieur de Vans-la-Grace?" enquired Angèle, somewhat impatiently.

"No, madam," returned the stranger: "I am merely the humble messenger of his lordship. These letters will best explain my object in intruding myself upon the privacy of *Madame la Marquise*."

The stranger tendered two letters to Angèle. One was from her husband; the other was from the Count. The latter ran as follows:—

"The Count de Vans-la-Grace was on his way to pay his respects to his fair relative, and lay his homage at her feet, when a serious accident, occasioned by the overturning of his carriage, detained him at a small town some leagues from Paris. But as the letter, with which he was charged by his respected uncle, might contain tidings of importance, the Count de Vans-la-Grace has taken the precaution of forwarding it, together with his other despatches, by a trusty friend, the Abbé de Saint Aubyn, whom he humbly recommends to the kind notice of the Marchioness de Florville."

"You are welcome, M. de Saint Aubyn," said Angèle, ashamed of her former coolness, when she had perused this letter. "May I hope that your friend is not dangerously wounded?"

"A bruise—a mere bruise," returned the Abbé hastily. "But the physician ordered him to be kept quiet for some days."

"Will you pardon me?" enquired Angèle, after a moment's pause; and she hastily cast her eyes over her husband's letter, in which the reasons of his procrastinated absence were fully accounted for, the increased difficulties of his mission being the cause of the delay.

"Are you acquainted with the Marquis de Florville?" enquired Angèle, when she had again consigned her husband's epistle to her bosom.

"Perfectly," was the laconic answer. "I travelled from Lyons with the Count de Vans-la-Grace."

"By which observation you would intimate that you had been previously staying there," returned Angèle, with a smile.

The Abbé bowed; but as he inclined his head, to express an affirmative, he did not take his eyes off the beautiful countenance of Angèle, on which he gazed with ill-concealed rapture while her own glances were averted. When he rose to depart, and when the Marchioness, who was anxious to do honour to the friend of her husband and of her husband's relation, pressed him to renew his visit, his large dark eyes met her's; and that single look seemed to pass through her frame like an electric shock. She felt its fascination, and blushed beneath its galvanic power; and in her confusion she found her hand locked in that of the stranger. But the pressure was only momentary—like the pressure which two friends give at parting; and when the Abbé was gone, she knew not, neither could she recollect, whether she had tendered him her hand in the moment of her embarrassment, or whether he had taken it. At all events, she felt dissatisfied with herself; and her mind was ill at ease as she pondered upon the singular expression of that glance which had produced so wonderful an effect upon her. During the remainder of the day she was melancholy and reserved; and for the first time since his departure, her husband's letters were no solace to her. Her bosom was a prey to strange and indescribable emotions!

Angèle arose early in the morning, having passed a restless and feverish night. The glance of Saint Aubyn haunted her like the phantom of a departed friend. Her head ached—her spirits were depressed—and her mind seemed to entertain a presentiment of evil.

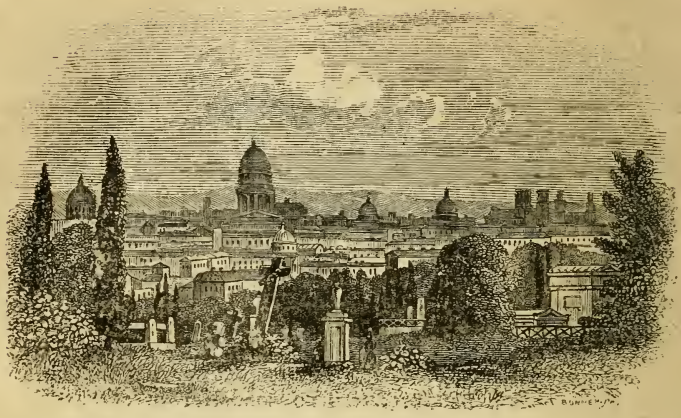
"What is the best remedy for a melancholy mood which takes possession of one without a reason?" enquired she, affecting a smile, of her lady's maid, Annette.

"The fresh air of the country, Madam," was the reply. "If her ladyship were to order the carriage and drive to Montmartre or Pere Lachaise, the melancholy would soon disappear."

"The tomb-stones of Pere Lachaise to dispel the clouds of melancholy!" exclaimed the lovely Angèle, a smile curling her red pouting lips; and then immediately after, a sigh agitated her bosom.

But a sudden whim had taken possession of her—she was but a child still; her age was only nineteen—and that caprice must be gratified. The carriage was ordered, and Annette accompanied her mistress to Pere Lachaise.

At the gate of the cemetery they left the vehicle, and walked, attended by a footman at a little distance, to the summit of the hillock on which the chapel stands. The day was clear and sunny; and a fresh breeze imparted a healthy hue to Angèle's cheeks. She felt her spirits rise as she surveyed the beautiful scene around her; and the evil impressions of the previous day were temporarily lost in admiration of the mighty city which lay stretched at her feet. From the height on which she stood, she embraced the whole of the French metropolis at one glance; and Paris, with its thousand domes and towers, appeared in all its sun-lit glory to the lovely creature that was occupied in the



animating survey. Far—far across the plain reached the vast assemblage of houses, rising one after the other in close succession, and blending together, as if it were but one giant building, in the distance. It was all there before her—the peerless city of the greatest nation in the world!

"Madame de Florville dares the cold wind at a somewhat early hour," said a voice, interrupting the reverie of contemplation in which Angèle was plunged, and falling upon her ears like a knell rung by a most musical and silver-toned bell.

Angèle started, turned pale, and sought in vain for a reply, as the Abbé de Saint Aubyn met her eyes, and cast upon her such a look as that which had fascinated her on the previous day.

"I fancied that the fresh air would do me good," murmured Angèle, after a moment's pause, during which she recovered her presence of mind. "But you yourself—are you not neglecting your diplomatic duties?"

"Mine was the task of a mere messenger," answered the priest. "you know that we churchmen meddle but little with state affairs."

"If you were acquainted with this spot," said Angèle, after another pause, during which she reflected upon what she was to say, "I should impose upon you the duties of a guide; but—"

"And I am most happy at being able to enact the part you require," interrupted the Abbé: and he led the way down the hillock, towards the tomb of Abelard and Eloise, the two servants following at a respectful distance. "This is the famous sepulchre of two of the most devoted lovers that ever existed," he added, pointing to the magnificent mausoleum, and again casting so strange a glance upon Angèle that she shuddered perceptibly.

Saint Aubyn took the hand of the Marchioness, to lead her round

the tomb the better to enable her to survey it; and as he painted the loves of Abelard and Eloise in the most glowing colours, Angèle was so struck by the earnestness of his manner and the beauty of his language, that she unwittingly suffered him to retain her hand. When his panegyric ceased, she hastily withdrew it; and a deep crimson blush suffused her cheeks, as she felt it gently pressed by the singular being whose eyes seemed to haunt her with their expressive glances.

"Yes, Madam," continued Saint Aubyn, "love is not for the old and the fretful—the jealous and the hoary. Love is a flame which must dwell in a young heart, if its principle be that of truth and real passion: it will find no fuel to nurse it in the bosoms of the withered and the gray."

Angèle liked not this speech; and yet there was something so pleasing in the manner of the priest, something so melancholy in the silvery tones of his voice, and something so plaintive and touching in his dark black eyes, that she could not express the slightest feeling of dissatisfaction. She moreover began to fancy at the moment, that the sentimental deportment of the priest pleased her better than she had at first imagined it could; and this thought was succeeded by another to the effect that the bold, and daring, and dashing soldier, whom she had expected, might have struck her less than the quiet and tranquil young man she had met in his stead.

On her return to her own house, Angèle hastened to her *boudoir*, and remained wrapped up in deep thought during the whole of the afternoon, till it was time to write her usual letter to her husband. But the epistle was neither so long, nor so tender as it generally was; and she herself perceived the altered tone in which it was conceived. She was at a loss to account for a circumstance that appeared to her so singular; and, as she finished by persuading herself that she laboured under the effects of a disordered imagination, the letter was despatched to the post as it was; and her mind felt relieved of a considerable load.

But we must not suffer our pen to run into those minute details which will only weary, without interesting, the reader. Nor can we tarry to narrate all the wiles which the treacherous priest made use of to subdue the stubborn virtue of the deluded Angèle; but we must fain confess that she fell a victim to a species of fascination over which she had no controul, and that she forgot, in an evil hour, all the kindness of the good old man whose name and riches had been so nobly laid at her feet.

And was it love that the once virtuous Angèle experienced for this mysterious priest? Yes—it was a deep, a burning, a consuming passion, partaking rather of the principles of the flame which the Spanish maiden nourishes in secret, than that with which the volatile French woman loves to disport. It was a feeling, which no pen can describe—a sentiment which was not to be known by common minds—an emotion which rather agitated with the force of a volcano than with the gentle aspirations of a pure and holy passion.

Saint Aubyn did not however suffer the extent of his own love to betray him into any foolish demonstration that was likely to engender publicity. His visits to the Marchioness in her own dwelling were

few and far between; and he arranged the times and places for their stolen interviews with the utmost cunning and precaution. He had been introduced in the first instance to the presence of Angèle as a stranger; and not a single domestic in her establishment was acquainted with his name. In his subsequent visits, he caused himself to be announced by the title of *Monsieur l'Abbé* only. Their loves were therefore removed beyond the remotest chance of suspicion and discovery.

In order to maintain appearances, Angèle kept up a regular correspondence with her injured husband; and when she perused his tender and affectionate replies, the burning tears of shame and sorrow would trickle down her cheeks. But she would then fly to the arms of him who had thrown his mysterious spells around her; and in the enjoyments of guilty bliss, she stifled the reproaches of conscience and the murmurs of remorse.

Angèle! Angèle! we are exceedingly sorrowful for thee, as we tell the tale of thy shame: but, in sooth be it confest, thou wast so lovely even in the deformity of thy vice, that something more than common pity disarms our hearts of the power of vituperation!

At length the dreaded morning arrived, which brought a letter to announce the final settlement of M. de Florville's business, and his speedy return to Paris.

"Not a word about Saint Aubyn—mention not his name," urged the Abbé to his victim, when he was informed of the sad news.

"But since you are acquainted with my husband," returned Angèle, "your visits may now be more frequently and fearlessly paid than ever."

"Ah! pardon the innocent falsehood!" exclaimed Saint Aubyn, sinking upon his knees at Angèle's feet, and covering her hands with kisses. "Dazzled by your beauty the moment I saw you, I invented the tale of my acquaintance with your husband to secure more readily the means of access to your presence."

"Pardon you, Saint Aubyn!" cried Angèle, playing with the long tresses of his jetty locks, which, contrary to sacerdotal habits, he seldom cut: "how can I refuse you anything? But, tell me—was not the speculation a hazardous one: might I not have mentioned your name in a letter to my husband!"

"I did not dread that," was the answer; "for I knew that we were born for each other; and the glance we exchanged at our first parting assured me that my name would never be introduced in a letter to the Marquis."

And you guessed rightly," said Angèle; "for I was afraid to write it, and I knew not why. But now—oh! now I comprehend the cause of my embarrassment! I however alluded to you; for I informed the Marquis that the Count was delayed by an accident upon the road, and that he had forwarded the letter to me by a trusty messenger."

"Then all will yet be well!" ejaculated the Abbé, his countenance assuming an expression of joy which flew in wild transfusion to that of the loving and deluded woman who had sacrificed her honour and her peace of mind for him. "But," continued the priest, after a moment's thought, "you must tell your husband the truth relative to

the Count; that you have never heard from him since the day he first made you aware of the accident he had met with, and that you have never seen him, nor do you know what has become of him."

Angèle promised to obey all the injunctions of her lover; and when plans for their future interviews had been duly discussed and resolved upon, they parted. The next morning the Marquis arrived, and was received by his beloved wife with more kindness than even he had expected to meet at the hands of one so much younger than himself.

Nothing could exceed the uneasiness of the old man when he found that no news had been heard of his nephew. The letters, which he and his wife interchanged during his absence, were chiefly occupied with expressions of continued affection, and were seldom devoted to the details of business. This was therefore the first time that the Marquis became aware of the neglect of the Count de Vans-la-Grace towards his wife; and, after due consideration, his uneasiness gave way to a feeling of resentment; for it struck him that the mercenary young man might be really averse to that match, which, if productive of issue, would rob him of the estate and name of his uncle.

The evening after the day that marked the arrival of the Marquis, was appointed by the Emperor for a long conference which the nature of that nobleman's mission to the authorities at Lyons rendered necessary; and the Marquis accordingly intimated to his wife that he should most probably be absent till a very late hour. They therefore bade each other farewell till the next morning.

The moment the Marquis left the house, a messenger was despatched with a note to the Abbé Saint Aubyn, under cover to the porter of the house in which he had hired a *suite* of apartments: and, as fast as the wings of love could bear him, did the enraptured young man hasten to the tender mistress who awaited his arrival with the utmost anxiety.

Angèle was reclining upon an ottoman placed opposite a cheerful fire, when Saint Aubyn was admitted to her presence. She was dressed in an elegant *deshabiller:* her long brown hair fell profusely over her shoulders, and a few straggling curls partially shaded the rich and voluptuous bosom which her open gown, made according to the fashion of the times, did not half conceal. Her cheek was pale; and her air was languid; but it was a pallor and it was a languor, the one so interesting, and the other so luxurious, that Saint Aubyn could not have wished them to have been changed into freshness and gaiety. The charming *robe*, which she wore, delineated all the fine contours of her noble form, as she reclined upon the sofa; and beneath her garments, peered forth two feet and ankles that were diminutive to a fault. There prevailed around her a halo and a perfume of beauty which intoxicated the senses; an air of languid voluptuousness and love that would have fired the soul of the most indifferent cynic in the world. Even Saint Aubyn, himself, who had long admired almost to satiety those witching charms, and who had possessed the fair creature that lay before him in all the magnificence of her loveliness, —even Saint Aubyn himself was struck with awe and admiration of his mistress, when he suddenly burst upon her presence.

Several hours passed away, and Saint Aubyn and Angèle sate upon

that ottoman together, whispering tales of love and vows of continued affection in each other's ears. At length twelve o'clock sounded by the nearest church; and the Abbé prepared to depart.

"All the hotel sleeps in peace and quietness," said Angèle; "and even the porter himself need not be disturbed. The wicket of the great gate has been left open by the orders of the Marquis, as the hour of his return is uncertain."

"I may then depart unperceived," replied Saint Aubyn; and he gathered up his hat and gloves, and rose to say farewell till their next meeting.

"Adieu!" whispered Angèle in a tender tone of voice: and at that moment a footstep, moving along the passage which communicated with her chamber, fell upon her ear.

"The Marquis!" she exclaimed in a tone of the wildest agony, and hastily pointed to a closet at the farther end of the room.

A low knock was heard at the door of the *boudoir* which communicated with the passage; and as that door opened, the slight jar of another, closing upon the form of the Abbé, echoed through the room.

"Excuse me, Angèle," exclaimed the Marquis, as he ente apartment; "but I am the bearer of such good news, I could not wait till morning to unfold them to you."

"How kind!" said Angèle, detesting the dissimulation to which she was obliged to stoop, and smiling upon the Marquis as he seated himself by her side on the ottoman.

"Her imperial Majesty has appointed my beloved Angèle to the place of one of the principal ladies of the bed-chamber," continued the Marquis; "and I myself am chamberlain to the Emperor. Henceforth we shall have our own apartments in the palace, and reside there."

"I congratulate you, my lord," began Angèle; "but as for myself—"

"There—there!" cried the kind old nobleman, placing his fingers upon the red pouting lips of his beauteous wife with the playfulness of a young lover: "enough of remonstrance, when honour and fortune, more brilliant than that we already possess, awaits us. But," added the Marquis, after an instant's pause, "you sent away Annette as I came in; and you know she may return, for we have no secrets from her."

"Annette has been in bed these two hours," returned the Marchioness, her whole frame trembling violently.

"Nay—I could swear that the door of the closet shut as I entered the room," urged the Marquis, still without suspicion.

"Impossible!" cried Angèle vehemently.

"My dear, you must have been dozing: there is some one *there!*" ersisted the old nobleman, astonished at the impetuosity of his wife's manner, which was generally so mild and docile.

"I was awake, and assure you that you are mistaken," returned Angèle, a crimson hue suffusing her entire face, and descending down her neck even to her very bosom.

"Angèle," said the old man, seriously "this obstinacy is foolish.

Think you that I shall be angry if you and the silly Annette choose to dissipate half the night in idle chatter? No—no: I am aware what women are, and can make allowances for their weaknesses, amongst which gossipping is the most venial."

And as the Marquis uttered these words, he rose and advanced towards the closet.

"It is a duty I owe to myself and to you, madam, to penetrate this mystery," continued the Marquis de Florville in a determined tone of voice; and he threw the closet door wide open.

"There is no alternative!" cried a hoarse and altered voice; and Saint Aubyn rushed from his hiding place with a dagger in his hand.

"Ah!" ejaculated the Marquis, as the light of the candle fell upon the features of the seducer: but the venerable nobleman said no more —the dagger descended with terrible force upon his breast—and the old peer fell heavily at the feet of his murderer and that murderer's mistress.

Angèle fainted upon the sofa.

With the rapidity of lightning did Saint Aubyn hasten to sprinkle water upon her pallid countenance; and when he saw that she was recovering, he besought her to be calm, or inevitable ruin—exposure —disgrace—and an ignominious death, would be the fate of them both. Then, in that hour of horror and alarm—in the presence of that scene of slaughter and of blood—and with her own garments sprinkled by the gore of the corse at her feet—did Angèle exhibit a species of super-human firmness, which the desperate urgency of the case and her guilty passion for Saint Aubyn could alone have originated. The plan to be adopted was settled by the fertile invention of the wily priest in a moment. He recollected that some carpenters had been at work in an adjacent apartment in the course of the morning, and that they had left their tools hehind them, as their labour was likely to extend to several days. In a few minutes he possessed himself of the materials that he required for his purpose; and, having cautiously removed the carpet from the floor of the closet (which was used by the Marchioness as a species of bath-room) he proceeded to take up the boards, performing his task as noiselessly as if he were the ghost of the slain!

In the course of an hour his work was complete: the boards were raised, and the corse was consigned to the aperture beneath.

"To-morrow night I will bring with me a sufficient quantity of lime to consume the body," he observed as he replaced the boards, and then again covered them with the carpet. "Now to eradicate those stains which bear such dread testimony against us."

But he worked with a perseverance and an assiduity worthy of a better cause; and the now magnanimous Angèle assisted him. When the grey dawn of morning peeped in at the window, the task of these individuals in the chamber of death was accomplished! Not a trace, that could betray them, existed in the elegant and luxurious *boudoir*.

"To night I shall be with you," murmured the priest, as he pressed his mistress to his guilty bosom; and with these words he took his departure.

What pen—what human power shall depict the state of mind in

which Angèle was left by Saint Aubyn? The kind—the good old man, who had raised her to a high and envied position—who was never wearied of heaping benefits upon her head—the tender husband—the more than father—who that night had come to bear the joyful tidings of fresh honours awaiting her whom he loved—he—that kind old man—was a murdered corpse, buried within ten feet of where she stood! The head of her couch touched the very partition which separated her chamber from the closet that formed his tomb! The stains of his blood were scarcely dry beneath her feet! Perchance the convulsions of his limbs had not yet ceased!

But we must leave the reader to conceive the full extent of that horror which we cannot describe.

Some surprise was excited throughout the hotel by the absence of the Marquis. No one had noticed his return at that fatal hour which was his last in this world; and alarm and surmise of danger prevailed amongst the domestics. But Angèle intimated that it was probable her husband had been again despatched upon an important mission by the Emperor, and that she might hear from him within a short time; and thus tranquillity was for the moment re-established.

True to his promise, at night Saint Aubyn returned to his mistress, enveloped in a capacious cloak, beneath which he carried a small bag filled with quick-lime; and when the servants were once more locked in the arms of slumber, the boards of the closet were again raised, and the murderer's task was completed.

"We are now safe," said Saint Aubyn to the Marchioness: "detection is impossible."

But the relative positions of those two individuals had changed: and restraint and embarrassment cloyed the wings of love. Angèle felt that her hands and her lips were pressed by a murderer; and she could not conquer a feeling of repugnance; while, on his part, Saint Aubyn seemed to appreciate the dearness of the sacrifice with which those privileges had been purchased. They separated at an early hour; and in order to avert all possible chance of suspicion, agreed not to meet again for some time.

Several days elapsed, and the dependants of the Marquis were anxious in their enquiries whether their mistress had received any tidings of her lord. She dared not quiet them by an assurance in the affirmative, and was therefore forced to admit that she had been favoured with no tidings, and was herself exceedingly anxious on his account. But as her intrigue with Saint Aubyn was not suspected by a soul, an idea of foul play on her part in reference to her husband never entered the mind of any individual connected with the establishment.

At length, the mysterious disappearance of the Marquis became rumoured abroad; and enquiry elicited the fact that he had been dismissed by the Emperor between the hours of eleven and twelve. A sentry at one of the gates of the palace of the Tuileries saw him pass into the Rue de Rivoli at the time specified. From that moment all traces of the venerable noble were lost.

The affair soon created an immense sensation, and conjecture on all sides tended to the belief that the Marquis had strayed into some bye street, and had fallen a victim to midnight assassins. Visits of con-

dolence were paid to the widow; and the Emperor himself declared, that if within a year and a day from the period of the Marquis's disappearance, he was not forthcoming, the Count de Vans-la-Grace should be inducted into the possession of the title. Angèle went into mourning; and the Empress, in pity for her loneliness, commanded her to take up her abode at once in the Palace of the Tuileries, so as to be immediately about the person of her imperial mistress.

In process of time the Count de Vans-la-Grace made his appearance in Paris; and, according to popular rumour, great were the exertions he used to discover the fate of his uncle. Angèle trembled when she heard of the determination of the young nobleman never to rest till he had satisfactorily elucidated the hideous mystery, that hung around the disappearance of her late husband; but her alarm somewhat subsided when she was told that it was not the Count's intention to reside in the house the Marquis de Florville had occupied in the Chaussée d'Antin; and all dread was entirely appeased, by another report which reached her ears, and which assured her that he had broken up the establishment and closed the mansion altogether. Another circumstance in Angèle's favour was the fact that the Count had not once sought to see her since his arrival; and she was not a little pleased, when a messenger from him informed her that his deep distress at his uncle's loss did not as yet permit him to risk an interview with one who doubtless felt the privation a thousand times more acutely than even himself. Thus the general conduct of the young nobleman was favourable to the wishes and safety of Angèle.

The year passed away; and during the whole period, the Marchioness had neither seen nor heard from Saint Aubyn. The circumstance was at first rather agreeable to her than otherwise; but, as the fear of danger and detection gradually wore off, the feelings of a woman resumed their empire, and she longed to cast her eyes once more on him whom she had so deeply—so tenderly—so passionately loved. And then the galling conviction of neglect rendered her curiosity and her suspense the more acute.

We said that the year passed away; and the Count de Vans-la-Grace became the Marquis de Florville. A handsome income was secured to Angèle; but the principal portion of the estate passed into the possession of the new lord.

One morning, when Angèle was in a more melancholy mood than usual, a strange and sudden phantasy seized her mind; and she ordered her faithful Annette to direct the carriage to be prepared for her immediately.

"We will pay another visit to Pere Lachaise," said the Marchioness: "a secret presentiment tells me that the jaunt will do me good. I feel restless and out of spirits."

The carriage was accordingly ordered round to the private gate at the back of the palace; and Angèle was driven to Pere Lachaise, as she had desired.

"You may follow me at a distance," cried she to Annette and the footman who attended her; and she proceeded alone to the tomb of Abelard and Eloise. "It was here," said she, musing aloud, that I met Saint Aubyn for the second time!"

"And it is here, Angèle, that we meet again," exclaimed a voice; and in a moment the lovers were clasped in each other's arms.

"Saint Aubyn! is it you?" cried the Marchioness, scarcely believing her eyes. "But," she added, with a movement of surprise, "you are altered—greatly altered. Your face is thin and pale—your dark hair has been cut close—and you no more wear the attire of your profession."

"Angèle," cried the young man, impressively, "I am no longer a priest!"

A gleam of joy and of hope shot through the mind of Angèle; for the idea that her loves with Saint Aubyn might yet be legitimatized in the sight of men, was like balm to a grievous wound. Saint Aubyn saw what was passing in her bosom; and he shook his head mournfully.

"Oh, no—Angèle; that may never be!" said he: "would to God it could! My crime had then been committed to some purpose."

Angèle's looks seemed to demand the explanation which her tongue could not ask; for her voice was choked with emotion.

"Seek not to fathom this mystery," returned Saint Aubyn. "You will learn the truth ere long; and it had better come from other lips than mine."

"Speak, Saint Aubyn, speak," cried the distracted woman; "what means this mystery to which you allude?"

"Angèle, my love for you has engendered a thousand crimes—a million deceits," cried the young man, bitterly: then, in an altered tone, he added. "but I am proud of all I have undergone—and all I have done for you, Angèle—for you are worthy of my love."

"Then, if you still love me, Saint Aubyn," urged the Marchioness, "leave me not in doubt. Why—since you have guessed my thoughts—cannot we proclaim our affection to the world?"

"Because," ejaculated St. Aubyn passionately, "our marriage would excite the astonishment of that world; and astonishment would lead to enquiry. Because such enquiry would at length conduct the myrmidons of justice to the very spot where all evidence of our crime lies concealed. Because, Angèle, our union now would be almost an acknowledgment of our former illicit loves. Because your fame and my reputation are as yet spotless and pure; but the breath of calumny may destroy them; and because, in fine, I am your relative by marriage—Angèle—I am the Count de Vans-la-Grace, and the present Marquis de Florville!"

As this terrible announcement fell upon the ears of the Marchioness, the sudden shock deprived her of the power of speech; and she was fain to lean against the tomb for support.

"Yes," continued the Marquis, "Saint Aubyn and the Count de Vans-la-Grace are one and the same person. Lured, dazzled, intoxicated by the fame of your beauty, I was already deeply enamoured of you before my arrival in Paris. But full well had the same rumour, which first published an account of your attractions, also circulated the history of your virtue and unconquerable fidelity to the old man who prized you so highly. Had I presented myself to you as the Count de Vans-la-Grace—the nephew of your husband—we should have both been guiltless now: but I burned to possess you—I coveted

your love as the most enviable of earthly treasures—and I resolved that, if the price were my immortal soul, I would gratify my wishes. I succeeded—I fascinated you—I astonished you by the singularity of my manners: and now, instead of a triumphant conqueror, behold me still, Angèle, a submissive and willing slave at your feet!"

"You shall hear from me to-morrow morning," said she, after a pause, "and I pray your patience till then. See—my people will be here; rise—and expose me not to their curiosity and suspicion."

"To-morrow, then, dearest Angèle," cried the Marquis, rising from his suppliant posture, and taking the hand of his fair mistress in his own;—"to-morrow I shall know my doom. With the utmost anxiety I await your decision."

And, having uttered these words, the Marquis hastened to conceal himself in an adjacent grove of trees, amongst which were many other tombs, while Angèle rejoined her domestics, and returned to the carriage that was waiting to re-conduct her to the palace.

During the remainder of that day Angèle sat absorbed in a gloomy reverie, as if she meditated some dreadful deed. In the evening she retired early to her bed-chamber, and soon dispatched Annette from her presence. When that faithful dependant sought her mistress's room on the following morning, she found her up and dressed; and then a casual glance towards the couch satisfied her that it had been pressed by no living being throughout the long and weary night.

"*Madame* has passed a bad night," said the abigail.

"I could not sleep," replied the Marchioness. 'But see that this letter be forwarded without delay to the Marquis de Florville; and let the messenger wait for the answer."

Annette obeyed the commands of her mistress; and in the course of the morning, the Marchioness received the following reply:—

"Singular and unaccountable as is the conduct of my Angèle, in naming such a place and such an hour for our interview of love, I shall punctually and faithfully attend to her commands. As desired in her note, I repeat her own words to show that I understand the instructions she has given me, and shall meet her, *at the hour of midnight, in the large vacant spot beneath the College of Four Nations, with the ground occupied by which the arena named as our rendez-vous corresponds.*

"DE FLORVILLE."

A gleam of joy shot through the heart of Angèle as she perused this note; and for the remainder of the day she seemed happy and cheerful.

When she was alone in her bed-room at night, she locked and bolted the door with the utmost caution, and then changed her dress for the warmest and most simple she could find. All this was only the work of a few minutes; and when her midnight toilet was performed, she selected a small key from a bunch that she took from a private drawer, and applied it to the lock of a door which belonged to a cupboard, or rather closet, curiously concealed in the wainscotting. It was evident that the door had not been opened for many years, as it creaked

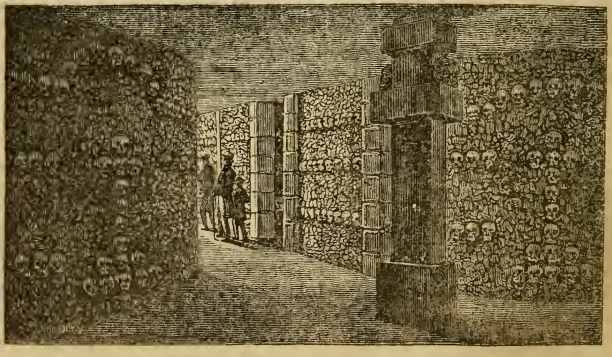
upon its hinges; but she seemed prepared to overcome all obstacles, and with a little oil soon caused it to open easily and softly.

The closet was about four feet square, and was quite empty. Angèle took the lamp from the table, and carried it with her into the closet, pulling the door close after her, and locking it in the inside. On that partition of the closet which faced the door just alluded to, there was a row of wooden pegs, apparently placed there for the purpose of hanging clothes upon them. Angèle counted the pegs, of which there were probably a dozen, from the right hand, and applying her taper fingers to the fifth she unscrewed it with but little difficulty. At the bottom of the hole which the object thus removed left exposed, there was a small lock; and to this also did Angèle apply a key taken from the bunch before alluded to. But instead of turning it, she pressed it inwards, and a door, admirably fitted into the wainscot of the cupboard, immediately flew open.

"The old book has not deceived me," said the Marchioness aloud, as she bent forward through the aperture thus disclosed by the hitherto invisible door, and perceived that it led to a narrow stone staircase.

The most death-like silence prevailed, as she stood for an instant upon the first step, when the door was shut behind her. She however yielded not to her fears, but descended the spiral staircase with a light though cautious step, carrying the lamp in her left hand, and supporting herself with her right against the solid stone pillar round which the stairs were built. At the moment the undaunted Marchioness arrived at the bottom of that deep and precipitous flight of steps, the clock of the Tuileries struck twelve; and the sound echoed even to the abyss in which Angèle found herself. There was something strange and solemn in the tone which the bell appeared to have in that subterranean realm; and again was she obliged to reason with herself in order to prevent her courage from failing her.

She had arrived at the bottom of the steps; and she stood upon the thresh-hold of the Catacombs! In that place of skulls—in that



vast sepulchre for the relics of millions of individuals—in the presence of hideous skeletons—surrounded by myriads of fleshless bones—at

the lone hour of midnight—far beneath the reach of succour in case of danger—with crimes of the blackest dye weighing heavily upon her mind—the reminiscence of her own infidelity to a kind husband before—and the phantom of the murdered Marquis behind—there—in that loathsome tenement of death, stood the elegant, the lovely, and the envied Angèle de Florville! But—ah! she was no longer a fit subject for jealousy and envy there: she moved, amidst that immense charnel-house, like the ghost of one of its denizens. Skeletons were on her right—skeletons were on her left: bones were over her head; and she tripped on skulls as she walked along! Oh! it was enough to turn her brain—to drive her mad—the rash, the daring woman! and at one moment her imagination invested one of those hideous skeletons with flesh, and placed a tongue between the lips, and gave words to that tongue;—and the words were "Perjured and faithless wife," and "Accursed murderess of a kind and grey-headed old man!"

But again she recovered her presence of mind; and she smiled upon the heaps of human bones around her!

The Catacombs extend beneath almost the whole of that portion of Paris which is situate on the southern side of the river. A small part passes under the bed of the Seine itself; and it was by this arenna, which commanded a private entrance to the palace of the Tuileries, that Angèle had entered the scene of death. With as much accuracy as could be possibly observed, the bones are heaped up in solid piles to correspond with the disposition of the houses of the city above; and the various walks and avenues in that wilderness of skulls, tally with the streets of the living town whose former denizens had found a cemetery there! Thus was it that Angèle was enabled to follow that line of path in the Catacombs, which lay beneath, and represented as it were, the quay on the south bank of the river over head; and in the course of a few minutes she found herself *on the large vacant spot which corresponded with the ground occupied by the College of Four Nations above.*

"Angèle—and have you really ventured hither, and at such an hour?" demanded the Marquis de Florville, as he ran forward to greet his mistress in that tenement of gloom and desolation.

"Thank heavens! you have not disappointed me!" exclaimed Angèle, an expression of joy animating her pale countenance.

"What means this strange freak, Angèle?" inquired the young nobleman, into whose mind strange fears and suspicions had naturally found a ready entrance. "Do you know, Angèle, that hundreds of people have lost their way in this horrid subterraneous city of Death, and have perished of starvation?"

"Extinguish your torch," said Angèle. "My lamp will not keep a-light above an hour, and our conference will be a long one. We shall require that torch shortly;" and snatching it from the hand of her lover, she threw it upon the ground, placed her diminutive foot upon it, and extinguished it. "Now," continued she, taking up the torch, "let us find a spot where we may rest ourselves and converse at our leisure."

"Oh! no—Angèle let us quit this terrible place," cried de Florville; but his mistress seized him by the arm, and led him onwards at random

through a hundred turnings, till they came to a spot where some of the earth had fallen from above, and on this they seated themselves.

"Now, noble Marquis de Florville," began Angèle, when she had recovered breath, "we will converse in peace together. Doubtless you guess not the motives of this strange interview?"

"No—for God's sake explain them," cried the young man, who, though as brave as a lion in the field of battle, trembled in the cemetry of Death.

"Ha! ha! 'tis a singular idea," returned the Marchioness, with a loud laugh. "It was but yesterday morning that you confessed the foul cheat you had practised upon me. You, yourself, acknowledged with your own lips, that had you not assumed the guise of a priest, we should yet have been virtuous; and I swear to you that your surmise is just! But now the deceiver is himself deceived! Hark ye, Saint Aubyn—Vans-la-Grace—de Florville—you are a villain—you made me what I am—a wretch who was faithless to her marriage vow, and who witnessed the murder of her husband by her vile paramour! You ruined me—you destroyed my peace of mind—you robbed me of my honour and of my tranquillity—you have rendered me unfit to live—and you shall die with me!"

"Angèle! Angèle!" exclaimed the young man, falling upon his knees before the infuriate woman.

"Nay—implore not mercy of me," cried Angèle, "it is not now in my power to grant it. But hear me out. The veil of fascination fell from my eyes but yester-morn, when I found that the Saint Aubyn, whom I had loved, was the Vans-la-Grace who had sought my presence, with the premeditated plan of my seduction ripe in his mind! Oh! 'twas then that I saw thee, de Florville, in thy true colours—and I suddenly hated, as much as I had ever loved thee!"

"O Angèle, we cannot die thus! we must not die so young!" cried the frantic young man. "We have a light—we will yet trace back our steps to the entrance——"

"Perish the hope!" interrupted Angèle; and she extinguished the lamp which she held in her hand.

* * * * * * *

Five days afterwards, the porter of the entrance-gate, in the Rue d'Enfer, recollecting that a visitor had entered the subterraneous kingdom late at night, and fearful that he had not returned, caused a search to be instituted throughout the windings and mazes of the place. In the course of a short time, the body of a female was found stiff and cold; and in another part of the Catacombs, a maniac was discovered, playing with the fleshless sculls around him!

In the bosom of Angèle was a letter addressed to the Empress, confessing the crimes with which the reader is now acquainted; and in the course of a few occasional lucid intervals, the Marquis de Florville, who was conveyed from the Catacombs to a mad-house, related the narrative and the particulars of the strange interview to which he had been summoned by the once lovely and envied Angèle.

CHAPTER LIV.

A CHAPTER ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO THINGS DRAMATIC AND THEATRICAL; BUT ONE WHICH, IT IS NEVERTHELESS HOPED, WILL NOT FAIL TO DIVERT THE READER.

As Mr. Snodgrass was somewhat indisposed at the time when the Committee was to meet, he was obliged to absent himself upon that plea, and Mr. Filligree Flit—a gentleman of fortune—was appointed in his stead. Mr. Snodgrass staid at home "to nurse his cold;" and Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle attended the meeting, the particulars of which it is not our purpose to record. Suffice it to say, that a most luminous Address was drawn up to his Majesty the King of the French, and that the Committee, the members of which appeared in court dresses or uniforms, presented it *in propriis personis* to the Citizen Monarch, by whom a gracious answer was returned.

Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle, had scarcely left their apartments, in which Mr. Snodgrass remained alone, when the erudite Mr. Septimus Chitty made his appearance in the drawing-room, where the invalid was seated. Business of the greatest importance compelled that great poet also to absent himself from the deliberations of the Committee, and he had hastened to the Rue Royale to make his apologies for non-attendance to the illustrious chairman, whom he met at the gate of the house in which the said illustrious chairman and his friends resided. Mr. Chitty then heard that Mr. Snodgrass was incapacitated by ill health from lending the weight of his talents to the Committee; and thereupon the one poet thought it would be but polite to drop in and condole with the other. The cause of Mr. Chitty's call is thus satisfactorily explained to the reader; but the reader does not as yet know what may be the contents of the mysterious roll of papers which Mr. Septimus Chitty carried so gracefully under his left arm.

"You never will guess what prevents me from attending the Committee to-day," said Mr. Chitty, sinking into a chair, and depositing the mysterious-looking papers upon his knees.

"A law-suit, perhaps," observed Mr. Snodgrass, glancing at the papers.

"*Ex iterum*—out again," cried Mr. Chitty.

"Then I really must throw myself on your mercy," returned Mr. Snodgrass, thrusting the toe of his right slipper into the fire-place to kick the logs of wood apart, just because they happened to be burning particularly well. Somehow or another, people never *can* leave a good fire alone.

"Well, then, I see I must not keep you in suspense," said Mr. Chitty, "and so this is the truth of it. A company of English performers arrived in Paris a few days ago, and they have hired the Odeon Theatre for a fortnight; and would you believe it——"

"What?" ejaculated Mr. Snodgrass, with the utmost anxiety.

"They are going to perform the *Creation* on Monday evening,' added the poet, with a triumphant smile.

"God bless me!" cried Mr. Snodgrass, who had heard a great deal of this inimitable drama, but who, as the reader will probably recollect, was not present when Mr. Chitty favoured Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Winkle, with the opening scene.

"Yes—and I thought I would just give you an insight into it," continued Mr. Chitty, "to enable you to judge of the probability of its success."

"I shall be most happy," said Mr. Snodgrass, whose vanity was flattered by this indirect compliment to his taste and judgment.

"There *was* a chorus of the *Four Winds*," observed Mr. Chitty, as he untied the roll of papers, and prepared to read from the first page; "but I left that out; so the *Four Winds* only just walk across the stage, and say nothing at the commencement."

"And how do people know that they are meant for the *Winds?*" enquired Mr. Snodgrass.

"Oh! because the play-bills tell them that," was the very satisfactory reply. "So having dispensed with their chorus, I introduce *Chaos* instead. Now listen;" and with this recommendation, Mr. Chitty began as follows:—

"SCENE, *Infinite Space. Thunder and Lightning. Meteors shoot over the stage.*

"*The* FOUR WINDS *pass across the stage; the* WEST *and* SOUTH *Winds laughing and dancing, the* EAST *and* NORTH *gloomy and sombre.*

"*Bell rings, and Gong is heard three times.*

"*Enter* CHAOS."

"Pray excuse the interruption," cried Mr. Snodgrass; "but how is *Chaos* dressed?"

"Oh! I forgot to tell you that—*tibi dicere id*," said Mr. Chitty; then referring to his list of *Dramatis Personæ*, he continued, "you see it was rather a difficult thing to know how to choose a suitable attire for *Chaos*, and so I was obliged to introduce a few modern inventions to help out the fiction. I have therefore clad *Chaos* in party-coloured garments, and placed an air-bag under his left arm, and a bucket of water upon his right. His shoulders are smeared all over with clay and mud; and he carries a lighted torch in his hand. We have thus a complete representation of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, in one person. What do you think of that: sharp work, eh? *Acutum opus.*"

"Admirable!" cried Mr. Snodgrass. "Now let us see then, what *Chaos* says for himself."

"You shall," returned Mr. Chitty; and the poet proceeded with his drama as follows:—

"CHAOS. I Chaos am—a strange compound, I own,
Of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. I alone
As yet this world of our's do represent—"

"To whom is *Chaos* speaking," demanded Mr. Snodgrass, with another apology for this second interruption.

"To whom is he speaking?" echoed Mr. Chitty, somewhat angrily. "Why! this is what is called a soliloquy! If you want to put the leading actor in a good humour, you must always give him a soliloquy: it enables him to show off his talents to advantage; particularly as he has it all his own way, like the bull—*velut taurus*—you know, in the China-shop."

"Pray, proceed," said Mr. Snodgrass, perfectly satisfied with this explanation.

"Well, I don't make *Chaos* say any more at this particular moment," continued Mr. Chitty; "and for a very good reason why—*ratio cur*—because I could not find a suitable rhyme for 'sent:' 'meant,' 'went,' 'bent,' 'tent,' could not be brought in; so I get over that difficulty by making the *Four Winds* come in again, and sing each a song. This will put the audience in a good humour to sit out the first scene, which, I candidly confess, is rather dry. But you shall hear.

"*Enter the* Four Winds. Chaos *seems agitated by their presence, and exit* R. H., *as if blown away, when the* North Wind *approaches him.*

"North Wind (*sings.*)

Know, I the rude and boist'rous North Wind am—
My blasting breath disperses all around;
The windows crack, the chimneys fall, doors slam,
And scaffoldings are levelled with the ground.

"East Wind (*sings.*)

Oh! all ye vessels anch'ring in the Downs,
Beware of me, when I—the East Wind—roam
Across the ocean, which, congenial, frowns
To hail my presence on its bed of foam!

"South Wind (*sings.*)

The South Wind am I—
And the sunny sky,
With the star-lit night, is my delight:
The sharks, oh! they dance,
And the sea-nymphs glance
At me as I pass o'er the waters bright.

"West Wind (*sings.*)

Over the billows frantic
Of turblent Atlantic,
I come from the lands where equality reigns,
But where the poor negroes still languish in chains.
Oh! I am the joyous Western Wind;—
I sigh for the realms that I left behind,—
Those realms, where snakes are as palm-trees long,
Where the woods with lions and tigers throng,
And where there's no absence of aught but of mind!"

"What does that allude to," enquired Mr. Snodgrass, when Mr. Chitty had thus terminated the chaunt of the *Western Wind*.

"The absence of mind, do you mean?" said the poet. "Why, do you not know that the Americans are famous for that failing."

"I recollect," returned Mr. Snodgrass.

"You see this drama is Operatic," continued Mr. Chitty. "The style is all the rage—*omnis furor*; and I expect great things from the effects I shall produce with my *Winds*. Now, listen to what is coming."

"Is it something very fine?" demanded Mr. Snodgrass.

"You shall judge for yourself," answered Mr. Chitty. "My *Winds* continue their chaunt:—

"North Wind.—I am the blast that blows from the North.
East Wind.—The clouds of the East have sent me forth.
South Wind.—I come from the tranquil seas of the South.
West Wind.—And I blow straight from the Maranon's* mouth.

"Omnes.

Bluster, bluster, bluster,
Loud winds, and mild!
Bluster, bluster, bluster,
Ye, that are so wild!"

"But if the state of Chaos prevail," observed Mr. Snodgrass, "how do these gentlemen—the *Winds*, I mean—know anything about America, and the other places alluded to in their songs."

"In Operas, the most improbable things are introduced into the airs," explained Mr. Chitty; "and if for instance, a jealous rival tells another that he will have his revenge, they both go off singing the same thing in chorus, although of course the latter cannot possibly mean a word that he says. Do you understand me?"

"Oh! perfectly," returned Mr. Snodgrass, considerably edified by this and the other explanations which his erudite friend had given him.

"The fact is," continued Mr. Chitty, "it is all very well to talk about Operas and music now-a-days: the English only go to the Opera to *hear* each other and *see* the music. That is the real truth of it."

"I am anxious to know how your Drama proceeds," said Mr. Snodgrass, looking excessively cognoscent.

"You never can guess whom I am going to introduce now," cried Mr. Chitty.

"*Chaos* again, perhaps," guessed Mr. Snodgrass.

"No," said Mr. Chitty. "But where was I? Oh! I recollect—we had just done the chorus in which all the *Four Winds* join.

"*Enter the* Year I. *Exeunt the* South *and* West Winds *at her approach.*"

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* The great river Amazon is also known by the name of Maranon.

"What is that for?" enquired Mr. Snodgrass.

"Why, you wouldn't have summer gales in January, would you?" cried Mr. Septimus Chitty. "But, hark! my *Year I.* is going to speak: this time it is in prose; and now you will gain an insight into the plot of the Drama.

"YEAR I.—At length behold me! I am the child of Eternity—and twelve daughters have I.

"NORTH WIND.—Twelve daughters, my lady?

"YEAR I.—Yes—twelve daughters; and that ye may not mistake them, listen to their descriptions. The first is cold, stern, and unrelenting in disposition; pitiless and uncharitable; harsh and unforgiving. Her name is January.—The second, who is very diminutive in size compared to her sisters, is not unfrequently worse than January, and always as bad. She persecutes the poor and needy, and fills the workhouses with shivering objects. Her name is February.—The third is spiteful in disposition, boisterous in temper, and passionate in the extreme. The gusts of her anger are like terrible hurricanes which raise the billows of the stormy sea, and swallow up the frail vessel. Her name is March.—The fourth is as capricious and wayward as an infant child; now all sunny with smiles; then absorbed in tears; now singing as gaily as the nightingale; then anxious and overcast. Her name is April.—The fifth is a bright and laughing virgin, whose hours of mirth and merriment are seldom invaded by a moment of tears, and whose pleasure is the cultivation of sweet flowers. Her name is May.—The sixth is more serious and sedate than her sister whom I have just alluded to. She delights in shady groves and the banks of clear rivulets, where she reads or meditates at her leisure. Her name is June.—The seventh is hot, fiery, and voluptuous; seeking in vain to quench her thirst of pleasure, and only intoxicating herself by the renewal of her enjoyments. Her name is July.—The eighth is a maiden whose looks bespeak that mellowness which is also to be found in the fruits that hang over her bower, or in the harvests the gathering of which she loves to superintend. Her name is August.—The ninth is staid and matronly in deportment, combining the remnants of the passions of youth with the discretion and reserve of mature years. Her name is September.—The tenth is uncertain and mysterious in her conduct; at one moment sportive and gay, at another dismal and frowning. Her name is October.—The eleventh is inhospitable and cheerless; frigid in manners, and cold in heart; without a virtue to speak in her favour. Her name is November.—The twelfth and last is a miserable and shrivelled creature, with bleared eyes, toothless, and tottering in her gait, dressed in furs which do not however keep her warm, and slipping at every step. Icicles depend from her nose; her very breath is frozen. Her name is December."

"Admirable!" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass. "To tell you the truth, I like your prose better than the poetry."

"My dear fellow, it is all necessary in its way," returned Mr. Chitty. "A man has talent: *quod tunc?*—what then? He must have taste, or it is useless. But, you do not mean to say that *that* is

one o'clock, do you?" exclaimed the poet, as the chime of a time-piece in the next room fell upon his ears.

Mr. Snodgrass referred to his watch, and replied in the affirmative.

"Then I must make myself scarce—*me facere vix*," cried Mr. Chitty; "for I am wanted at rehearsal this morning. So good bye—you must postpone the remainder of my piece till you see it; and mind and come on Monday night—you, and Pickwick, and the others. *Nunquam mens*—never mind calling the servant—*vocans servum*:" —and with these words Mr. Chitty took his departure, having forgotten, for the first time in his life, to enquire about lunch, or borrow money.

On the ensuing Monday evening, Mr. Pickwick, accompanied by his three followers, proceeded to the Odeon Theatre, agreeable to the promise made by Mr. Snodgrass to Mr. Chitty. In order to secure good places, they arrived at the door of the theatre in good time; indeed so good, that it is no figure of speech to say that they arrived *at the door*, because beyond it they could not expect to penetrate for at least half an hour. They, however, had the satisfaction of falling in with Mr. Chitty, who had been stationed there at least twenty minutes before even the premature arrival of his friends.

"What a terrible crowd!" said Mr. Pickwick, who, after incredible efforts, had at length managed to push a very heavy man off his toes.

"Very disagreeable," murmured Mr. Winkle, who had just felt for his pocket-handkerchief and found that it was missing.

"This is what an author delights in!" observed Mr. Chitty, with a triumphant smile; and in another moment his hat was knocked completely over his eyes.

"It is a pity that the police are not here to maintain order, and make themselves useful," said Mr. Snodgrass: but scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when his right eye was nearly put out by the corner of the cocked hat of a Gendarme who was elbowing his way through the crowd.

"How stupid not to open the doors at once," remarked Mr. Pickwick: "there must be more than enough people to fill the theatre."

"The manager is not quite such a fool," returned Mr. Chitty. "The greater the crowd, the more likely are the papers to notice the *vogue* enjoyed by the company; and if only one or two people were crushed to death, the manager would make his fortune."

"How shocking!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick.

At this moment the doors were thrown open—the crowd made a tremendous rush—and Mr. Pickwick was carried completely off his legs, and eventually set down opposite the little office where the money was to be paid for admittance. After a great deal of trouble, the five gentlemen managed to squeeze themselves together upon the front seat of a box into which they were actually thrown by the box-keeper; and then they found that Mr. Pickwick had only lost one skirt of his coat, Mr. Tupman his purse, Mr. Winkle a silk handkerchief, and Mr. Snodgrass his breath, in the pressure of the crowd.

"I wonder why so many people are allowed to enter without paying," said Mr. Snodgrass.

"Friends, my dear fellow, to support the piece," returned Mr.

Chitty. "Half the house consists of orders to-night. You must recollect that they are all English who are present; and the manager was obliged to admit about a thousand without receiving a single farthing. That's the way—*id via est*, you see, in which it's done."

"Well, if that be also a plan to make the manager's fortune, as well as having the people crushed in the crowd," observed Mr. Pickwick, "I certainly think the theatrical world must be a very curious one."

The pit and galleries were soon crowded with all the English artizans and mechanics who find a living in Paris and its suburbs; and they soon began to demonstrate that taste and delicacy of feeling which so strongly characterise them at home. One gentleman in a smock-frock, in the gallery, earnestly requested a friend, whom he recognised in the pit, to "mind his eye;" and then, probably with a view of ascertaining if his advice were attended to, he propelled an orange into the very optic concerning which he had expressed such an amiable anxiety. Another individual, who had been occupied all day in unloading a large waggon of charcoal, and had not found time to cleanse himself, informed the manager in a very loud voice, that "he'd better lift up the rag, or give him back his blunt;" and a third, who had most likely forgotten his coat, as he appeared in his shirt-sleeves, solicited to be made acquainted with the place where he might purchase "a ha'porth o' Job's patience, done up in paper." A fourth begged to remind an inoffensive old gentleman in the boxes "that he had a precious bad hat;" a fifth appeared curious to ascertain of a young dandy with moustachios, "whether his mother knew that he was out;" and a sixth had just suggested the propriety of "flaring up," when the screen (for there are no such things as curtains in France) was raised.

"There's *Chaos*," whispered Mr. Chitty, when the *Four Winds* had passed across the stage: and so indeed he was; but in a state of such excitement from the previous use of a bottle of brandy, that his brain partook more of his assumed character than anything else about him, unless it were his speech.

"Why, he can scarcely stand," said Mr. Snodgrass.

"Admirable actor!" cried Mr. Chitty enthusiastically: "he does all this to sustain his part. How natural he is in the bewilderment of his ideas!"

"Why, you're wery drunk, old chap!" shouted the gentleman in his shirt-sleeves, from the gallery.

"Turn him out!" cried some one from the pit.

"Who?" demanded the gentleman in the gallery.

"You!" was the laconic reply; and then order was again restored: but an universal shout of laughter succeeded this momentary silence, when, on the entrance of the *Four Winds*, *Chaos*, intending to be blown off, fell heavily down upon the stage, crushed the air-bag which he held under his arm, and deluged himself with the pail of water.

"Stage effect, that!" said Mr. Chitty, whom it never for a moment struck that *Chaos* was intolerably drunk.

"The manager seems to know how to produce it to the very life," observed Mr. Snodgrass, somewhat satirically.

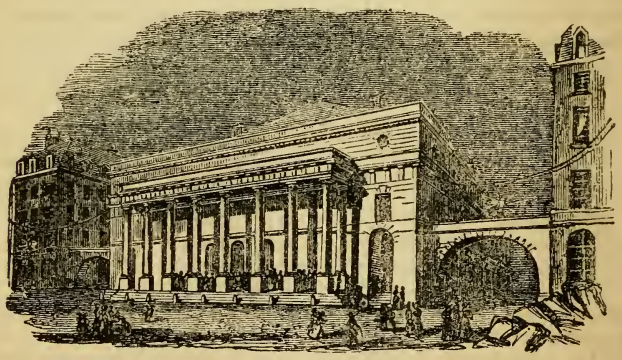
The piece proceeded, and as the plot became more and more in-

tricate and unintelligible, the audience grew more clamorous; it was, however, brought to a termination amidst the uproarious applause of those who had been admitted for nothing, and the hisses of those who had paid. Mr. Chitty nevertheless seemed quite contented with the success of the drama; and he whispered to Mr. Snodgrass, that if he could only get three or four more like it, which he had by him, performed upon the stage in England, he should be enabled to retire upon a handsome income in the course of fifteen or twenty years.

The Creation was followed by one of the inimitable Moncrieff's exquisite pieces; and the amusements of the evening terminated on one side with a tragedy upon the stage, and on the other in a desperate fight in the gallery between the gentleman who had forgotten his coat and him whose ablutions had been that day neglected.

Mr. Pickwick prudently suggested the propriety of suffering the crowd to depart before he and his friends attempted to make their exit. The great man had one skirt left to his coat, and he did not see the necessity of suffering that to follow its companion. His advice was accordingly adopted; and when the little party issued into the open air, they had an opportunity of surveying the fine *façade* of the theatre by the light of a lovely moon.

The Odeon is one of the largest and handsomest theatres in Paris. Eight pillars, of exquisite architecture, ornament the entrance, and



rise from a large flight of steps that extend along almost the whole front of the edifice. The roof of the colonnade is more massive than elegant; but it corresponds with the remainder of the building, and is neither awkward nor heavy in appearance. The interior is splendidly fitted up; the stage is one of the most extensive in Europe; and the general arrangements and decoration of the house place it in the first rank of the Parisian theatres.

Mr. Pickwick and his companions, having surveyed the exterior of the Odeon Theatre till their noses were benumbed with the cold, proceeded to the nearest *restaurant*, where they partook of an excellent supper, and drank the future success of Mr. Chitty's dramatic achievements in a bumper of Champagne.

'I have been thinking," said Mr. Chitty, "that I shall now devote myself entirely to the stage, since my drama has been so well received. London managers will hear of my renown, and be glad to receive my pieces. I can easily write two for each theatre, every season; and they will bring me in three hundred a-year. I shall then be able to live at my ease—*apud otium*."

"Of course you will print this play of yours," cried Mr. Snodgrass.

"I think of doing so—by subscription," returned Mr. Chitty.

"Put me down for two copies," said Mr. Pickwick, whose philanthropy was enlarged by the Champagne.

"So I will," exclaimed Mr. Chitty, with a chuckle; and taking a paper from his pocket, he wrote down Mr. Pickwick's name.

The great man's companions then authorised the poet to add their subscriptions to the same list; and since Mr. Chitty inadvertently (as he declared) had written the word "Paid" in large letters against each name, the four gentlemen thought it would be a pity to give him the trouble to scratch it out again, and so they placed the money in his hands at once, reckoning ten francs for each copy.

Mr. Chitty, having thus obtained the wherewith to begin the publication of his great work, took an affectionate leave of his kind friends, and hurried home to bed; while they, on their part, returned in a hackney-coach to the Rue Royale. Mr. Pickwick, however, did not feel the slightest inclination to retire immediately to rest; his supper lay heavily upon his stomach; and so, ere he retired to his couch, he wiled away an hour with the following tale.

CHAPTER LV.

THE BLIND BEAUTY OF MONTAIGLE.—A TALE.

THE ARRIVAL OF AMAND ST. CYR AT THE CASTLE.—BLANCHE, THE BLIND GIRL.—THE CHEVALIER GEORGES.—THE SEVENTH NIGHT.—THE COMBAT.—MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.—THE DENOUEMENT.

In one of the most beautiful parts of La Vendée was situate the ancient castle of Montaigle. Two-thirds of this vast edifice had been suffered to crumble away into ruins; the remaining portion still contained handsome halls and lofty apartments; and these served as the residence of the Count Montaigle and his two children.

The castle stood in the midst of a large park, well stocked with deer: before it was an extensive lake, studded with artificial islands; and behind it was a garden in which the most beautiful flowers were culled, and the choicest fruits abounded. The skeletons of the once mighty towers raised their summits to the heavens; and in the winter the chill blast echoed gloomily through the apertures where windows formerly had been, but where rusty iron bars only remained. A portion of a deep archway showed the Gothic style of architecture in which the castle was originally built; but the habitable portion had been so modernised by frequent repairs, that it might almost be said in this respect to resemble the ship of Theseus, which the Athenians mended

so frequently that nothing of the original vessel at length was left behind.

The Count Montaigle was a nobleman of ancient family, and a staunch royalist. At the time when our story commences, Bonaparte was First Consul of France; and the Count Montaigle alone lived in peace and tranquillity on his estate, by the maintenance of a strict neutrality, notwithstanding his political principles, amidst the disturbances and revolts that were taking place around him. It was in vain that his only son, Charles, endeavoured to persuade the old nobleman to strike a blow in favour of the exiled princes; the Count resisted the appeal and the enthusiasm of his heir, and resolved not to sacrifice the welfare of his children in an useless attempt, the dangers of which would only recoil upon himself.

The Count had, moreover, a strong tie to bind him to an existence of prudence and peace. He had a daughter, who at an early age had been deprived of the blessing of sight. Her eyes were perfect and beautiful to the view; but, alas! their powers of utility had ceased to exist. Blanche was the name of the young victim of so terrible an affliction; and a lovelier creature was never seen by mortal beholder. She was about sixteen when the epoch of our tale commences; and all her beauties were developed in their most fascinating forms. Her brown hair was parted over a brow on which a few freckles lingered in order to render the clearness of her complexion the more apparent; and her sightless orbs, of the darkest—deepest blue, were shaded by long black lashes. In disposition she was as amiable as she was lovely in person; and, although her misfortune had tinged her mind with melancholy, she was patient, docile, and uncomplaining. For twelve long years had the charms of Nature bloomed in vain for her; and she was taught to believe that she must descend to her grave with only the faint impressions of this world's glories which she had received in her earliest infancy, before her sight abandoned her.

Oh! how lovely is this earth, with its green trees—its waters—and its flowers! When we wander through the verdant groves, where thousands of feathered warblers are pouring forth their untutored harmony—or when skimming the surface of the deep in the noble vessel that triumphs over the tide; how boundless should be our admiration of Nature's enchanting wonders! The blue and serene sky—the dun clouds of sun-set—the variegated colours of sweet flowers—the blossoms of spring—the fruits of autumn—the golden harvests—the shady bowers of jessamine and clematis—the lofty hill—the peaceful valley, with its happy village—the splendours of great cities—the simplicity of the hamlet—the pomp of armaments—the humble congregation of peasants around the pulpit of their pastor—the hoary-headed patriarch—the lovely shepherdess;—all these, the glories of Nature and of God, were but distant and fitful visions in the memory of the poor blind girl!

It was on a fine evening, in the month of June, that the Count, accompanied by his son and daughter, walked in the park for the first time after his recovery from a dangerous illness. Charles was in the middle; on his right arm leant his beloved sister, and on the other his revered father. The conversation which occupied their attention, turned upon the late warlike transactions in La Vendée.

"And is it positively asserted, Charles," enquired the old nobleman of his son, "that the exiled favourite of the people of La Vendee has actually returned to France?"

"Such is the report," answered Charles. "I am moreover informed that he is concealed in the neighbourhood, and only waits for a favourable opportunity to rear the royalist flag. His name is adored in this part of the country: all his large fortune has been expended in the cause, and his arrival is calculated to produce an immediate rising, as soon as the fact shall be publicly advertised. Indeed, it is also rumoured that General Pichegru and General Moreau secretly befriend him."

"Ah!" exclaimed the Count; "then there is indeed hope of success against the conqueror of Marengo, who, instead of being the advocate of liberty, comes as a military dictator amongst us, reeking with the blood of trampled Austria!"

"That conqueror must be something more than a common man," observed Charles, "if he keep the seat which the dauntless Danton, the crafty Barras, and the miscreant Robespierre, could not retain."

"Still, if I could love an enemy to my father's cause," said the amiable Blanche, "this Napoleon Bonaparte would be the object of my admiration."

"Probably the young Vendean, whose arrival has created a sensation in these parts, may yet rival the great soldier who will doubtless essay to raise the fortunes of his family upon the shrine of his glories, but who may find himself mistaken," exclaimed Charles Montaigle in a tone of voice which showed how sincerely he was interested in the welfare of the Chevalier Georges, the Vendean.

The conversation was suddenly interrupted by the presence of an individual, who appeared abruptly before the Count and his children, as they turned the corner of one of the shady avenues of the park. He was well but plainly dressed; his countenance was pleasing, and expressive of frankness and candour; and his years might be about five or six and twenty.

"Pardon this intrusion, my lord," exclaimed the stranger, stopping short, and taking off his hat, when he espied the Count; "and if you be, as I suspect, the well-known and respected Monsieur de Montaigle, I am certain that my appeal for your assistance at this moment will not be made in vain."

"I am the Count de Montaigle," returned the old nobleman in a reserved tone of voice, for a strange suspicion had entered his mind. "Speak—and if the boon you require be compatible with my honour and my principles, you shall not ask in vain."

"My lord—circumstances which I cannot, dare not explain," replied the stranger, "compel me to seek a retreat where I can hide myself in safety for a few days. I am pursued by the agents of police—and I swear to you, Count de Montaigle, that my character is as unimpeachable and as spotless as yours. If you seek to know more of me at present, I must renounce the hope of finding a refuge with you!"

"I will not intrude upon your secrets, young man," observed the Count: "one question only must I ask, and upon the reply depends my decision. Have I the honour of speaking to the Chevalier Georges?"

"My name is Amand St. Cyr," was the answer: "my profession is that of medicine. Are you satisfied?"

"Sir," returned the Count, "I am a man of honour, and a soldier; I am moreover a father. This is my son—my only son; and this is my daughter, who has unhappily been blind from her infancy. You would not bring ruin upon me and my family—oh! no—I feel convinced you could not, for your appearance speaks volumes in favour of your integrity. Come then, Sir, and be our guest: rely upon us, as we rely upon you."

The young man, who from the moment the old nobleman mentioned his daughter's infirmity, had never taken his eyes off her beautiful countenance, and who seemed to survey her with an air of such sincere compassion and interest that the fiery Charles could not find his conduct rude or discourteous,—Amand, I say, seemed to pay but little attention to the conclusion of the Count's speech, and only acknowledged it with a bow. The whole party then proceeded to the Chateau together; where an apartment was speedily prepared for the stranger.

St. Cyr improved considerably upon acquaintance. His was a mind, which did not lavish its riches, whether natural or artificial, with that pedantic profusion which so frequently characterises men of talent and ability. He was rather bashful, silent, and timid, than forward and obtrusive. His manners were mild and pleasing; the tone of his voice was soft and musical; and his features were handsome, though somewhat feminine. He studiously avoided any allusion to political matters; and maintained a most guarded silence relative to the cause of his concealment.

As he never stirred abroad until the evening, and then did not venture beyond the precincts of the park, he was necessarily thrown a considerable part of each day into the society of Blanche; and it was evident that he soon regarded the afflicted girl with something more than a common interest. He had hinted, even on the first night of his arrival at the castle, that his small experience in the study of medicine taught him to believe her case anything but hopeless; and, when made acquainted with the particulars of the malady which originated the misfortune, he delivered his opinions and arguments in so lucid and simple a manner, that not only Blanche herself, but even her father and brother listened to him with the most profound attention.

"The study of the eye," said Amand, on another occasion, when the topic was revived again, "is one quite distinct from that of medicine. A practitioner may be an excellent anatomist, but no oculist. Diseases, which operate directly upon the eyes and cause a privation of sight, may be cured, and sight restored by the removal of the malady which engendered its loss: but when the disease itself has disappeared, and the eye still fails to perform its duty, the skill of the surgeon is baffled, and he is induced to fancy that the optic nerves have been rendered altogether powerless by the violence of that disease. Then comes the aid of the oculist; and he will tell you that the same remedies for the disease which originated the loss of sight, will not always succeed in restoring sight itself. The primitive cause is the disease; but that cause engenders others which are independent of the

disease; and thus is the study of the eye one of peculiar delicacy and research."

"Oh! if I only dared entertain a hope—however faint," exclaimed Blanche, joining her hands together, and raising her countenance to heaven, "what a gleam of joy would steal into my soul!"

"Encourage not those hopes, dear sister," cried Charles, "for fear they can never be realized."

"And yet even the skill of the doctor is frequently assisted by the imagination of the patient," observed St. Cyr.

"All my fortune would not suffice to recompense him who should restore my daughter to the possession of sight," said the old nobleman, tears trickling down his venerable cheeks.

"There may be other boons more acceptable than fortune," cried Amand emphatically; then turning hastily towards the attentive Blanche, he added, "Yes, *Mademoiselle*—hope—indulge, I say, in hope—the liveliest hope! Picture to yourself the blessings which are enjoyed by those who can gaze upon Nature in all its beauty and variety;—and the dream shall haply be realized. Hope, Blanche—hope, I repeat: trust, confide in me—and I will pledge my honour, which is dearer to me than my existence, upon the result of my cares!"

"M. St. Cyr," exclaimed Charles, "I believe you would not trifle with the feelings of my sister: "as a man, is there really hope?"

"There *is* certainly," was the calm reply. "Call me impostor—villain—and cheat, if I fail to perform my promise."

"And yet the first medical men in France have pronounced the case to be hopeless," contiuued the still sceptical Charles." Delleroye the oculist, whose cures amounted almost to miracles, and who departed this life upwards of eight years ago, was of the same opinion."

"Ah! you consulted Delleroye," observed St. Cyr: and after a moment's silence, he added, "I was his pupil."

"Then *your* hopes are now defeated also," cried Blanche, eagerly addressing herself to the strange young man.

"You must have consulted him about ten years ago—that is two before his death?" said Amand, without replying to the question.

"Exactly," exclaimed Charles: "but how could you divine that?"

"Because had you applied to him six months afterwards, your sister would have profited by a new discovery which he made but a short time before his eyes closed upon this world, and which——"

"And which you are acquainted with?" anxiously interrupted the father and daughter in one breath.

"And which he left me to perfect," was the reply, delivered in St. Cyr's usually calm and unobtrusive manner.

"And you will essay your skill upon me, *Monsieur*?" cried Blanche, a ray of hope now dawning upon her mind; "and you will endeavour to restore me to that blessed state which even the meanest of God's creatures enjoy! Oh! tell me so once more—and I will fall at your feet and worship you!"

"I repeat my promise, *Mademoiselle;* but any unnecessary excitement will only retard the cure. Sir," continued Amand, addressing

himself to Charles, "you confided in my honour when I sought an asylum in these walls; I must now put trust in you."

"I shall not betray your confidence," was the answer.

"There are three chemists in the neighbouring town, and one herbalist," proceeded St. Cyr. "You yourself must procure for me the four articles I require; and I appeal to your honour not to purchase more than a single ingredient at each shop, nor to submit the drugs you obtain at one chemist's to the opinion or analysis of another."

"I comprehend your meaning," replied Charles, "and shall not allow the secret of your remedy to be even suspected."

"I see that you understand my motives," said Amand. "I will make a list of the articles I require, and the sooner they are obtained, the better will it be for the peace and tranquillity of your sister. One month will suffice to complete the cure."

Charles Montaigle hastened to the adjacent town, to procure the articles which Amand required; and having duly followed the instructions which had been given him, he was about to return to the castle, when a disturbance at the door of the principal inn attracted his attention. He drew near to the scene of the riot, and found it was occasioned by the dispute of a lacquey in livery with some of the dependants of the tavern. Charles was going to withdraw from the spot, when he was recognized by the people who had collected round the querulous party, and every cap was soon doffed to the "young lord," as he was styled by the peasantry in the neighbourhood of his father's castle.

"What is the cause of this disturbance?" enquired Charles.

"Only that livery-servant giving himself airs," was the answer.

"And to whom is he attached?"

"He belongs to a young gentleman who has been here for the last four or five days, and whom nobody knows any thing of, save that he has plenty of money, and never stirs out of his room except at night to take a little walk. Some think he is a foreign prince in disguise; but then the landlord says he speaks French like a native; and others pretend that it is the Chevalier Georges, whose name is revered amongst us, though his person is unknown to most of us."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Charles; and he was about to put another question to the individual who had given him the above information, when the lacquey stepped forward, and addressed him as follows:—

"The mention of your honourable name, *Monsieur*, has saved me a tolerably long walk. I was on my way to the residence of your venerable father, when these unmannerly dogs picked a quarrel with me, and a fight commenced. This is the letter which I was charged by my master to deliver to you."

Charles took the epistle which the domestic handed to him, and, having hastily broken it open, read the contents, which ran thus:—

"An enthusiast in the royal cause, who is in momentary danger of being captured by the myrmidons of justice, ventures to appeal to the hospitality of the Count de Montaigle, and solicit shelter and concealment in his castle. The writer of this is an individual of rank and

honour, and will not forget the service which he shall have received at the hands of him to whom he is convinced this letter is not addressed in vain. He would be more explicit; but dares not trust his secrets to the precarious safeguard of paper."

The address of the stranger and the date were affixed to this singular and mysterious epistle, which excited the curiosity of Charles de Montaigle to no little extent.

"What!" said he to himself; "within a week two fugitives seek our hospitality! The writer of this letter can be no other than the unfortunate Chevalier Georges! To introduce him to the castle unknown to my father, would be a sin against my venerable parent; to refuse the shelter that is so modestly solicited, were a disgrace to our family and to the cause itself; and to attempt to obtain the Count's consent to the concealment of the Chevalier in his dwelling were madness! But I will see this stranger; and tell him the difficulty in which I am placed with regard to his demand."

The lacquey perceived that Charles hesitated; and hastened to enquire if "*Monsieur* would would wish to see his master?"

Charles replied in the affirmative; and the domestic conducted him to an apartment in the tavern, where a man of about four or five and twenty, dressed in the extreme of fashion, and bedizened with numerous articles of jewellery, was lounging idly upon a sofa: a bottle of wine and a glass stood upon a little table near him. The lacquey announced Charles by his name, and then withdrew upon a signal from his master.

"I took the liberty of opening a letter that was addressed to my father," began Charles, after the interchange of a few formal civilities, "and hastened to converse with you in reference to the contents; for, if I be right in my suspicions relative to your real name—"

"Indeed—you suspect who I am, then? Oh! no—that is impossible!" said the stranger, starting from the sofa, and pacing the room in an agitated manner.

"Sir, you are as safe with me as if you were a thousand miles distant from this spot," exclaimed Charles, hurt at the suspicions which the uneasiness exemplified by the stranger seemed to imply.

"Ah! say you so? And you will not betray me?" returned the young man vehemently. "But," he added, in a more composed tone of voice, "How could you suspect who I really am? My servant is fidelity personified."

"Because your mysterious behaviour at this hotel first created my suspicions—this letter strengthened them—and your present agitation confirms them. You are the Chevalier Georges who has for some time been expected in the neighbourhood!"

The stranger started—gazed upon Charles for a moment, as if he could not believe his ears—then averted his head—appeared to reflect a short time—and at length exclaimed, "You have guessed it: my life is now in your hands!"

"Where it is safe," cried Charles. "But think not that idle curiosity alone prompted me to sift your secret Oh! no—I am myself a

royalist, and would willingly take up arms and join you in the cause, did not my father restrain me; and much I fear that he will not consent to your concealment in the Chateau."

"*Peste!* that is unfortunate," cried he, whom we must now call the Chevalier Georges. "But cannot you introduce me under a false name!"

"I dare not practice a cheat upon my father," replied Charles, the blood mantling in his cheek. "Rather accompany me to the castle, throw yourself upon his mercy, and trust to the nobleness of his heart."

"Whichever plan you prefer," quietly observed the chevalier; and had not Charles made up his mind never to judge by first appearances, he could not have believed that the individual before him was the heroic, the gallant, and the disinterested champion of the ruined dynasty of France.

"On second thoughts," said Charles, after a moment's consideration, "it would be imprudent in you to accompany me. The whole town would thence know the place of your concealment; and the police would speedily trace you to the castle. To-night—at a late hour—when every eye is closed in slumber, you can proceed to the Chateau, and I will be ready to receive you at the Park-gate. I will then conduct you to my father, and your eloquence must do the rest."

"A thousand thanks, my excellent—my noble friend," cried the chevalier. "But are there any visitors at your father's castle—any one, in fine, who might detect me?"

"There are but my sister, who has the misfortune to be blind," answered Charles, "and a gentleman—a surgeon, I believe—who has also some good motive for concealment. You will therefore find a companion in misfortune, in Amand St. Cyr."

The chevalier appeared to be satisfied with this explanation; and Charles took a temporary leave of him to return to the Chateau.

The medicaments were precisely those which Amand required; and he set himself immediately to work in the cause of the lovely and amiable girl, for whom he already entertained the most sincere affection. Of a portion of the drugs he compounded an ointment to be applied night and morning to the eyes; and of the remainder he formed a decoction which was to be taken at certain intervals. The patient gladly submitted herself to the treatment of St. Cyr, in whom she had the greatest confidence; and he, on his part, renewed his conviction of the eventual success of the system he had adopted.

At ten o'clock that evening, the Count, Blanche, and Amand were seated round the supper-table, when Charles, who had purposely invented an excuse to account for his temporary absence, suddenly entered the room, followed by the Chevalier Georges.

"Father," said Charles, "a noble young patriot claims your protection—your hospitality. Do not deny the boon: when he mentions his name, you will see that he is worthy of your friendship."

"Yes, my lord," exclaimed the Chevalier, falling at the feet of the old nobleman, whose hand he took and kissed, "I implore your gene-

rosity and favour. A sufferer in the cause of my country—and one who will never yield to usurpation and tyranny—claims an asylum of the Count de Montaigle, with the full and confident hope that no one throughout La Vandée could refuse to harbour the Chevalier Georges."

"The Chevalier Georges!" ejaculated St. Cyr, starting from his seat, and rushing towards the suppliant: then, as if he suddenly recollected himself, he stopped short, muttered something to himself, and resumed his chair.

The Count made no answer for a long time. A warfare of emotions and inclinations was raging violently in his bosom. He glanced towards his daughter, and was about to refuse the boon; he turned his eyes upon his son, and then upon the individual at his feet, and the courage and generosity of the old nobleman gained the victory.

"Rise, noble youth," he at length cried: "my house is honoured by your presence. And, if I appeared to hesitate, pardon the timidity and vacillation of a father."

"That apology the Chevalier cannot find necessary," observed St. Cyr, a smile of the most sovereign contempt curling his lip: but wherefore, and at what, Charles, who noticed the expression of his countenance, could not imagine.

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"I cannot say that I greatly admire your friend St. Cyr," remarked the Chevalier to Charles, when the latter conducted him to the apartment which had been prepared for his use. "He appears to be one of those puppies who require putting into their proper places."

"St. Cyr, is a quiet and unassuming young man," returned Charles: "but I must confess that his behaviour was somewhat extraordinary, not to say rude, to you this evening. I am at a loss to account for his motive.

The Chevalier's lacquey entered the room with his master's trunk at this moment; and Charles, having wished his guest a good night's rest, retired to his own chamber.

On the following morning St. Cyr and his lovely patient walked in the garden together. Amand had recommended a little gentle exercise; and Blanche supported herself upon the arm of him who had undertaken to make her the happiest of women. In a few minutes they were joined by the Chevalier, who had espied them from the window of his apartment.

"The loveliness of the day has lured you abroad at an early hour, fair lady," began the Chevalier, addressing himself to Blanche, without taking the slightest notice of St. Cyr.

"I have recommended exercise to my patient," hastily replied Amand, in a tone which plainly indicated his displeasure at having the *tête-à-tête* he was enjoying with Blanche thus interrupted.

"Mademoiselle de Montaigle can answer for herself," exclaimed the Chevalier, casting a terrible glance at the man whom he detested from the first moment he had seen him.

"Moderate the tone of your voice, Chevalier Georges," returned St. Cyr; "any unnecessary excitement will only do harm to my fair patient."

"Attempt not to play with me, Sir, through the medium of your

privileges as a medical man," cried the Chevalier; "or this trusty blade of mine may teach you to curb that insolent tongue of yours."

St. Cyr only replied by a scornful laugh.

"*Par Dieu!*" thundered the Chevalier, irritated beyond all bearing at the conduct of Amand, "your life's blood shall atone for this outrage on the honour of a gentleman."

Blanche screamed, and besought St. Cyr not to push the Chevalier to extremities; and at the same moment the party was joined by Charles, who had overheard the heated language which issued from the lips of the Chevalier.

"Gentlemen, let me implore you, violate not the rites of hospitality by disputing in my father's territories," cried Charles.

"Dispute!" exclaimed St. Cyr, with the same contemptuous smile which Charles had remarked the preceding evening: "Oh! no—it is not worth my while to dispute with him: one word alone in his ear—aye, one word—and he will kiss the dust at my feet!"

"Wretch! coward!" shouted the Chevalier, turning deadly pale; "I defy you."

"I repeat," continued St. Cyr: "one word—and if I do not make you quail before me, then spurn me as you would the timid spaniel at your feet."

As he uttered these alternatives, in his usual calm and unmoved style, St. Cyr led the Chevalier to a little distance from the spot where Charles and Blanche were standing, and whispered a few syllables in his ear. Charles anxiously watched the effect of Amand's behaviour; and to his surprise, he perceived that the Chevalier started, grew pale and then crimson by turns, staggered, and would have fallen to the ground, had not St. Cyr supported him.

"By heavens, this is passing strange!" cried Charles, as he witnessed the singular scene; and in a few hurried words he explained to Blanche the magical effects which the whisper of St. Cyr had produced upon the Chevalier.

Scarcely had he done speaking, when those two individuals rejoined him.

"I am now satisfied," observed Amand; "and shall esteem it as a favour if no questions be put to the Chevalier."

"And I, on my part," said Georges, "beg to apologize for the rudeness of my behaviour."

Thus terminated this singular affair, the circumstances of which made a deep impression upon the mind of Charles, who however held his peace, for fear of exciting the terror and suspicion of his father. His opinion of St. Cyr was, notwithstanding, as much raised by the transaction of the morning as the character of the Chevalier sank in his estimation; and he sincerely congratulated himself upon not having actively joined the cause of an individual whose behaviour was dubious to a degree.

Time wore on—day succeeded day—and week followed week; and a rapid change took place in respect to the sight of the lovely Blanche. At first the light of a lamp was just perceptible, though dim and undefined as to shape; and then a confused assemblage of black and white flitted across her eyes as she gazed from the windows upon the

surrounding landscape. In a fortnight she could distinctly trace the forms of persons as they passed or stood before her; and everything seemed to prognosticate the favourable result which St. Cyr had never despaired of attaining.

"Now that we are convinced that the ointments and potions have taken the desired effect," said St. Cyr, one morning, about three weeks after the commencement of his attendance upon the Count's daughter, "I must unavoidably subject you to a severe penance."

"Oh! I am so confident in your skill, Amand," exclaimed the unsophisticated girl, "that nothing you can enjoin shall be neglected by me. What, then, is it you would have me do?"

"My object is to make certainty doubly sure, Blanche," answered the young man; "and that which I am about to suggest is, at this stage of my treatment of your case, probably better than unguent or drug. You must remain in your chamber for an entire week; the windows must be darkened; and everything must be kept tranquil and quiet around you. The time will hang heavily upon your hands; because even the trivial excitement produced by conversation on common topics must be avoided. Concerning your food I will myself give instructions anon. On the seventh night, the shutters of your chamber must be unclosed; and you must sit by the window, without suffering sleep to overtake you, so that the gradual dawn of morning may fall upon your eyes, which by degrees will thus become habituated to the lustre of the most effulgent sun. From that moment you will no longer require my care."

Six days passed away, and Blanche followed the instructions of her adviser. For one moment only every morning did Amand visit her and enquire after her health; he would not sacrifice her well-being in order to gratify a selfish desire of passing a longer period in her society. Her domestic addressed not a word to her; and she spoke not herself, save when she was obliged to issue an order relative to her comfort. Not even her father and brother were permitted to approach her chamber.

On the seventh night, St. Cyr visited her and bade her be of good cheer, and full of hope; for that the morrow would see her restored to the enjoyment of sight; and having opened the shutters with his own hands, he retired perfectly satisfied as to the result of his experiments.

The anxiety of the old nobleman and Charles may be well conceived by a reader who possesses only the smallest endowments of Nature's kindest sympathies and affections. They felt that were they to retire to rest, to sleep was impossible; and they resolved to sit up and wait the arrival of the morning which was to decide the fate of one so near and dear to them. St. Cyr expressed his resolution to keep them company; and in order to wile away the time as well as they were able, some of the choicest juices of the grape were produced from the Count's richly-stored cellar. The Chevalier was absent, attended by his domestic; and neither St. Cyr nor Charles were sorry when, on enquiry, they found that he had intimated the probability of his not returning till a very advanced hour in the night, as he had business of the utmost importance to transact in a neighbouring town.

The clock had struck eleven, and more than one flagon had been

emptied by the Count and his companions, when their conversation was suddenly interrupted by a loud knocking and ringing at the principal entrance to the castle. In a few minutes, a domestic rushed into the room, crying, "The gendarmes are at the gate, and they demand admittance in the name of the First Consul! They also bear a warrant backed by the Prefect of the Department."

St. Cyr started from his chair, and cried, "They have come at last! I have been fortunate in avoiding them so long."

"They seek not you, my dear friend," said Charles: "it is the Chevalier whom they require."

"I must depart, Charles," returned Amand, bitterly: "but you shall soon hear from me again. Do not leave the room—their suspicions will not be excited if they find you and your father together. I can retreat by the back of the castle, through the garden. Adieu—my lord; farewell, Charles: remember me most kindly to Blanche; and accept my sincerest thanks for the asylum you have granted me."

He stayed not for a reply, but hastily wrung the hand of the old nobleman and Charles, seized his hat and cloak, and hurried from the room, just as the porter unbarred the gates to admit the gendarmes.

"The noble-minded young man," cried the Count, "may heaven protect him."

"He is safe by this time," said Charles; and as he uttered these words, the gendarmes entered the apartment.

"A thousand apologies, my lord," began the officer, who commanded the force, "for this intrusion; but the noble Count de Montaigle, I feel assured, will not harbour a felon."

"A felon!" cried the Count, "To whom do you allude?"

"We know," answered the gendarme, "that the individual whom we seek, has been harboured here for the last three weeks. It is useless, my lord, to deny the fact."

"I deny or affirm nothing," exclaimed the old nobleman. "Search,—and do your duty."

"Is it possible," persisted the officer, still willing to enter into a compromise with the Count, and anxious not to outrage his feelings by searching the castle,—"is it possible that Monsieur de Montaigle, whose probity and honour are so well known, can protect a man guilty of an enormous crime, against the reach of justice?"

"Crime?" ejaculated the Count and Charles simultaneously.

"Eh? is forgery no crime?" returned the gendarme.

"Forgery!" cried the Count, while Charles was struck suddenly dumb at the idea that he had made a melafactor his friend, and that malefactor so deeply loved by his own sister! He moreover perceived but too well, that the residence of the Chevalier Georges in the Chateau was not even suspected.

"Yes—forgery," repeated the gendarme: "and by whatever name he may have passed here, his right one is Jacques Acelot."

"In that case, pursue him—but no," exclaimed the Count, suddenly checking himself.

"Blanche will owe her sight to him, unworthy as he is to claim even her gratitude!" whispered Charles to his father.

"You have read my feelings, Charles," returned the old man: "we will not screen him—neither will we betray him:"—then, addressing himself to the officer, the Count added aloud, "Your bird is flown: he escaped this day."

"My lord!" exclaimed the gendarme.

"On the honour of a nobleman, Sir!" cried the Count. "If you doubt me, you are at liberty to search the castle."

"Your word is sufficient," returned the gendarme; and with a low bow, he drew off his men, and left the apartment.

"St. Cyr a forger!" cried the Count sinking back exhausted on his chair.

"Never will I trust men more!" exclaimed Charles, as he heard the gates of the Chateau closing behind the gendarmes.

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The news that the Chevalier Georges had arrived in La Vendée and was only waiting for a favourable opportunity to place himself at the head of those insurgents who were ready to join him, had spread like wild-fire during the month which passed in the manner were now related; and at length a numerous body of men collected together, and beat the country surrounding the Count de Montaigle's estate, to discover the hiding-place of him whom they were willing to welcome as their chief.

It was about one o'clock in the morning, that the outposts of the ill-disciplined army were alarmed by the tread of a horse's hoofs; and in a few moments a mounted cavalier galloped up to the station.

"*Qui vive?*" was the demand; and a loaded musquet was levelled at the breast of the stranger.

"Your chief," was the answer: "the Chevalier Georges."

"The watchword?" exclaimed the sentry.

"*Welcome the Chevalier from England!*" was the prompt reply.

"Turn out the guard!" shouted the sentry; and in a moment the tidings of the Chevalier's arrival were communicated to the next post, and thence they soon spread throughout the army.

The Chevalier received the salute of his adherents at the out-post; and, attended by the officer, hastened to join the main-body of the forces.

The prowess of the Vendéans was soon put to the test. A body of regular troops had been dispatched against them; and scarcely had the Chevalier time to make himself known to the chiefs who had been chosen in his absence, when the insurgents were attacked with a fury that for some time threatened to annihilate all their hopes and ambition. The battle commenced at day-break—shortly after the Chevalier's arrival—and for an hour the republican forces seemed to carry every thing before them. But Georges, by a manœuvre, as remarkable for the skill which conceived it, as for the talent that put it into execution, turned the fortune of the combat, and completely routed his opponents. The regular troops fled in every direction; five or six hundred men were taken prisoners; and all their baggage and ammunition fell into the possession of the conquerors. Thus was a signal

victory obtained, and an important blow struck within four or five hours after the Chevalier had joined his supporters.

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In the mean time, strange were the changes which had taken place at the castle. Between the hours of seven and eight, the Chevalier Georges, attended by his lacquey, returned from his midnight excursion; and about the same time, a messenger with the news of the advantages obtained by the Vendéans, galloped into the court-yard of the Chateau.

"I felicitate you most warmly upon your gallant achievements," exclaimed Charles, when he met the Chevalier: "yourself and the tidings of your success arrived at the same moment; and I dare dread you would have kept the result, as you did the nature, of your night's absence, a secret from those who watch your proceedings with anxiety."

The Chevalier acknowledged the congratulations of his host with a suitable reply; but he anxiously avoided any conversation which might lead him to give an account of the engagement. Charles perceived his reserve upon this head, and did not press him to relate those particulars which he was however dying of curiosity to learn. He therefore changed the topic by informing the Chevalier of the domiciliary visit of the gendarmes, the accusation of forgery against one Jacques Ancelot, and the escape of St. Cyr—a narrative which seemed to make a deep impression upon the Chevalier. But a circumstance, which now occurred, painfully diverted the attention of Charles from the affairs of either the Chevalier or St. Cyr.

The *femme de chambre* of Blanche had been dispatched to the chamber of her mistress to ascertain the result of the night's vigil, and to prepare the beautiful girl to receive her father and brother, who were anxious to hasten and congratulate her upon that recovery which they deemed certain. But the servant returned to the presence of her masters, with horror depicted upon her countenance, and tears streaming from her eyes. The unhappy Blanche was no where to be found: her chamber was empty; and the only trace of her departure was the marks of mud-stained feet upon the carpet of her apartment, and on that of the corridor which led to a stair-case communicating with the back entrance.

"The villain!" exclaimed Charles, when this terrible disaster was made known; "in return for our hospitality—our kindness—he has deprived us of the greatest treasure we possess. Oh! St. Cyr—Ancelot—or whatever may be thy name—most terrible is the vengeance I will take upon thy devoted head!"

"And I will hasten to rejoin my followers," cried the Chevalier: "our encampment is scarcely four miles distant; and I will dispatch messengers and scouts all over the country to discover the wretch who has thus dared to violate the sanctity of your dwelling!"

"Noble chieftain!" exclaimed the almost heart-broken Count, who entered the apartment as the Chevalier uttered these words; "may heaven reward you!"

The Chevalier's servant soon saddled a couple of fleet horses; and

he and his master galloped rapidly away from the castle, where gloom and despair had succeeded to hope and joyous anticipation.

On the following morning an *aid-de-camp* of the Chevalier arrived at an early hour at the gate of the Chateau, and demanded an immediate audience of the Count. The request was instantly complied with; and the *aid-de-camp* was ushered into the presence of the old nobleman and his son.

"I am charged," said the emissary, "on the part of the Chevalier Georges to inform you, my lord, that your daughter is safe, and that the villain Jacques Ancelot has been arrested. The Chevalier will restore your child to you in the course of the morning; and he begs you to believe that nothing but the urgent nature of his affairs would have caused him to delay the happy moment."

The Count and Charles would have gladly put a thousand questions to the *aid-de-camp;* but that officer was unable to give them any further information concerning the affair which so deeply interested them. He was therefore suffered to depart; and the happy father and overjoyed Charles anxiously awaited the return of Blanche and the Chevalier to the castle. One fear only damped their joy; and this was connected with the return of that sight she had so firmly hoped to recover.

Two hours passed away; and never was suspense more acutely felt than by the Count and his son during a period which seemed a century to them. At length the noise of wheels approached the castle; and a carriage drove up to the principal gate. Charles gazed anxiously from the window to catch the first glimpse of his beloved sister; but how great was his surprise—how undefinable his emotions, when the graceful St. Cyr descended from the vehicle, and aided Blanche to alight.

In a few moments Amand entered the room, leading Blanche by the hand. But how shall we describe the joy and delight which filled the bosom of the enraptured father, when Blanche, quitting him who conducted her to the bosom of her family, hastened to precipitate herself into the arms of her sire, and then, without a guide, flew to embrace her brother in his turn?

"She sees! she sees!" cried the Count, almost sinking beneath the sudden joy, as if it were an equivalent weight of woe: "she sees—and she is restored to us!"

"Alas! but by whom?" exclaimed Charles, uncertain whether to welcome St. Cyr, or to chase him from his presence.

"By whom!" ejaculated Blanche, turning towards the young man, and gazing upon him with a glance expressive of tenderness and pride: "by the noblest of friends—the best of men! He rescued me from the villains who bore me off in the middle of the night—he heard my cries, as he passed a cottage in which I was imprisoned—he hastened to my succour, and he secured the wretches who were returning to the hovel where they had left me alone during the greater portion of the day. He carried me to his own pavilion, entrusted me to the care of the kind wives of some of his own followers; and to that noble chieftain are you indebted for my safety. Long—long, dear father, shall we have to bless the moment when we put faith in the honour of a

stranger; and during the remainder of our lives must we pray for the welfare of the Chevalier Georges!"

"The Chevalier Georges?" exclaimed the Count.

"Georges!" cried Charles: "impossible!"

"It is however true that the Chevalier Georges is before you," said he who had but lately passed under the appellation of St. Cyr; "and he, who usurped my name and title, was the rank impostor and felon, Jacques Ancelot! A gendarme, whom I took prisoner yesterday evening, recognised the forger in the person of that wretch. His lacquey was doubtless an accomplice."

"Oh! I comprehend the mystery now!" cried Charles; "but what could have been the villain's motives for carrying off my sister?"

"He has confessed all," replied the Chevalier. "Compelled to quit Paris on account of his atrocities, he sought refuge and privacy in the adjacent town: but learning that his course had been traced, the idea struck him that he might obtain an asylum beneath this hospitable roof. The belief, which you, Charles, entertained, that he was the Chevalier Georges, was eagerly taken advantage of by the dishonest villain; and thus was he introduced to the Chateau. You may imagine my surprise when I found that he had availed himself of my name; but presuming him to be some political fugitive who had gladly availed himself of my anticipated return to La Vendée, I thought the cheat too innocent to be exposed. You may remember his emotions when in the garden I whispered a word in his ear, which told him that I was aware of the imposture. His motives for carrying off Blanche, were instigated by the desire of forcing her to espouse him, and thus furnish him with the ties of relationship as a plea for demanding your interference, my lord, to procure him a pardon, or hush up the fraud he had committed in Paris."

"And to you, noble young man," cried the Count, "am I indebted not only for the recovery of my daughter, and the defeat of a villain's schemes, but also for the new life you have bestowed upon that daughter. Say—how can I ever sufficiently reward thee?"

"By bestowing upon me the hand of Blanche," returned the Chevalier. "My early application to study has been beneficial to an extent which I never could have anticipated; and I shall be more than recompensed by the possession of her on whose gratitude I have already a small claim."

"Gratitude!" exclaimed Blanche; and she hesitated—but the blush upon her cheek made a more eloquent avowal of her love than could have been conveyed by all the sentences ever framed by the syllables of language.

"Think not," said the Count, after a moment's consideration, "that I am unwilling to bestow my daughter upon you, Georges. No—she is yours: but consider your position—the general of an insurgent army—proscribed by a despotic government!"

"I know, and have weighed it all," returned the Chevalier, hastily. "My military career is over; and I am proud to be the first to set a pacific example to my infatuated followers by availing myself of the amnesty proposed by the First Consul. I now see that Napoleon is great and generous; and I dare not longer attempt to disturb a career

which seems destined to invest France with prosperity and glory. My confiscated estates will be restored to me; and though my revenues be much impaired, more than a competency is still left. These are the conditions upon which I purpose to espouse your daughter!"

"She is yours!" cried the Count, joining the hands of the young couple together; "and, Charles," added the old nobleman, "you may from this day forth hoist the tri-coloured standard upon the walls of the Chateau."

"And a very prudent step it was, too," thought Mr. Pickwick within himself, as he laid aside the book in which he had been perusing the above tale, and hastened to his bed-room.

CHAPTER LVI.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. PICKWICK AND MR WELLER, THAT LEADS TO A SERIES OF VERY INTERESTING ADVENTURES.—MESSIEURS. PORRETT AND KNACKERS.—MR. WINKLE EXHIBITS SOME AMIABLE TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

"SAM," said Mr. Pickwick, on the following morning, when he awoke and perceived his faithful attendant disposing his clothes in order as usual, "what is the matter with your eye?"

"Raythe damaged, Sir," was the answer: "but it's a blessin that my nose ain't in a sling, for I got wery sewerely punished last night, Sir, vhile you wos at the theayter."

"Punished!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick; "and by whom?"

"Vy, Sir," returned Mr. Weller, whose right optic presented an interesting combination of colours, amongst which blue was the most predominant, "there's a party o' milling coves jist come over from England on a little private spekilation o' their own."

"Ah! I see—mill-wrights engaged in the prosecution of their craft," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"No sich thing, Sir," cried Sam: "they ain't no more mill-wrights than you or me is. They're chaps as belongs to the fancy."

"Traders in little articles for the female toilet, I dare say," observed Mr. Pickwick.

"L—d, Sir, how wery innocent you air, to be sure," cried Mr. Weller. "The fellers as I speaks of is spereted boys vich knows how to handle their fives."

"Now I understand you, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick. "They are people who have come over to establish a tennis-court, and you have doubtless received a blow from a ball in your eye. Well, Sam, there is no harm in a little innocent recreation."

"Vy, Sir, von must actiwally spell things next," exclaimed Mr. Weller, with a little more impatience of manner than he usually exhibited towards his master. "The milling covies as I alludes to, and von of vich gived me this here poult in the eye, is men dewoted to the

wery amiable science of fighting. Prize-fighters they calls 'em in England."

"And one of them dared to assault you, Sam?" cried Mr. Pickwick, in the deepest indignation.

"Ve assaulted each other by mutual consent, I should raythe think," answered Mr. Weller. "Fust he gived me a teazer on the left cheek, and then I jist dropt him two for his pains, von on the conk and t'other on the box o' dominos. 'Hit him hard, Tom, as the Colonel says to the drummer ven they flogs the men to death at Voolich,' cried von feller; an' blowed if he didn't too. But I jist gived him enough to relish his dinner vith, instead o' cheese, and come off vith no more hurt than this here black eye."

"Then in plain English, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, "you mean to assert that you had a fight—a disgraceful fight—with a common boxer."

"Disgraceful, Sir!" cried Mr. Weller: "nothin' worn't more fairer in the whole vorld. Ve had two seconds, and a umpire—and the claret flowed wery freely on both sides."

"Then you were tipsy, I suppose," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, casting a terrible glance at his delinquent valet, who only nodded and smiled significantly, without expressing the slightest contrition or regret.

"Ve scarcely touched a drop o' anything the whole blessed evenin', Sir," answered Mr. Weller. "But raly von don't dare use figgers o' speech vith you, Sir, 'cos you doesn't understand the langvidge o' the fancy. Claret means blood, Sir."

"It is distressing to think that the words commonly in vogue amongst genteel people cannot suffice for the lower orders," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick: "but the truth is, that the young gentlemen themselves about London, delight now-a-days to ape the vulgarity and manners of common prize-fighters, and thus is the English language gradually becoming a mixture of the most improper synonyms."

Having delivered these sentiments, the weight of which was considerably assisted by the impressive manner in which the learned orator waved his night-cap backwards and forwards as he spoke, Mr. Pickwick jumped nimbly out of bed and stepped upon a large cat which was quietly reposing on the carpet. The great man gave a terrific shout—the large cat flew first at his leg and then out of the room—and Mr. Weller bit his lips till they bled to restrain his laughter. The adventure, however, restored Mr. Pickwick to his wonted good humour; and when he found that he had sustained no damage from the ire of the cat, he himself indulged in a loud cachinnation in the music of which Mr. Weller most cordially joined.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, when his mirth had somewhat subsided, "I have conceived an idea, which I am determined to put into force."

"I vait your pleasure, Sir, as the young kitten said to the man vich vos debating in his own mind vether he should tie a stone round her neck and chuck her into the river, or not," was Mr. Weller's observation.

"Where do those misguided men, whom you call prize-fighters, meet?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"At a English chop-house close by the Italian Opera, Sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"At what time are they visible?" asked Mr. Pickwick.

"Venever you claps eyes on 'em, Sir," returned Sam.

"I mean, when do they meet at the tavern to which you allude?"

"At eight this evenin', Sir," said Mr. Weller, who began to comprehend the drift of all these questions.

"Very well, Sam," added Mr. Pickwick, seriously, "I shall accompany you thither at that hour; and mind you do not interfere in anything that may take place when we are there."

"But, Sir —" began Mr. Weller.

"No observations, Sam," said Mr. Pickwiek: "I am determined to act and be obeyed as it shall seem good to me;"—and with these words, this extraordinary philanthropist proceeded to the breakfast-room, where he imparted his design to his three friends.

"I have got an appointment, unfortunately," observed Mr. Tupman, who did not at all relish the scheme.

"And I am too unwell again to stir out," cried Mr. Snodgrass. "My cold has returned; or else I caught a fresh one last night at the theatre;"—and in order to adduce something in the shape of proof to support his assertion, Mr. Snodgrass was suddenly seized with a desperate fit of coughing, which only ceased upon the recommendation of Mr. Weller, who had followed his master into the parlour, not to choke himself.

"Well, I would rather take Winkle with me, as it happens," said Mr. Pickwick; "because he has mixed, more or less, in early life with all kinds of sporting characters, and knows how to deal with that class of individuals."

"Oh! yes — I — I'll go — with you," stammered Mr. Winkle, quite a blessing to see him.

True to his word, at eight o'clock precisely did the immortal Mr. Pickwick, accompanied by Mr. Winkle and Mr. Samuel Weller, turn

from the Boulevards des Italiens into the little square upon which the Italian Opera then looked.

The façade of this edifice consisted * of six columns of the Tonic order, which were devoid of all ornament. The building, however, had an imposing appearance, and borrowed much of the excellence of its effect upon the beholder from the regularity of the structures around it.

"Here ve air, gen'lemen, said Mr. Weller; and in a few moments he conducted Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Winkle to a small tavern close by.

"Let us have some brandy-and-water, Sam," whispered Mr. Pickwick, as he seated himself at a table, an example that was immediately followed by Mr. Winkle; "for we must not appear to have come hither for the motive which really brings us."

The two gentlemen were speedily accommodated with the beverage they required; and Mr. Weller, having procured a bottle of stout for himself, took a seat at a respectful distance from his master.

"Here's von on 'em, Sir," suddenly observed Sam, in a low voice, as a ruffianly-looking fellow entered the room. "How air you to-day?"

This last sentence was addressed to the prize-fighter, who immediately bestowed a patronizing nod upon Mr. Weller, and then very unceremoniously seated himself at the same table which was occupied by him and his masters. Mr. Weller was about to remonstrate against this excess of familiarity; but a sign from Mr. Pickwick prevented him.

"Well, and how are you by this time?" said the prize-fighter. "Eye damaged, I see. Here, Villam, give us a glass of cold without—strong, mind. Tom Knackers will be here in the course of a few minutes."

"Is he any the vorse for the mill, Mr. Porrett?" enquired Sam.

"Here he is to answer for himself," returned Mr. Porrett; and the moment Mr. Knackers and Mr. Porrett met each other's view, they both burst into a tremendous shout of laughter; although neither probably knew what there was to laugh at.

They were both strong and muscular men, attired in a species of flash style which has the same reference to real gentility as counterfeit jewellery to genuine gold, and bearing on their visages divers indications of hard-fought battles. For instance, Mr. Knackers' left eye was adorned with a dreadful scar; and Mr. Porrett's nose was very nearly flattened level with his face. They had both moreover lost a few of their front teeth.

"Gentlemen, will you allow me to treat you to a bowl of punch?" said Mr. Pickwick; and without waiting for the assent of the prize-fighters, he ordered William to bring the proffered treat.

"Who is the old fellow?" enquired Mr. Knackers.

"That there's my mas'er, gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller aloud; and Mr. Knackers and Mr. Porrett hoped that both Mr. Pickwick and Mr.

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* This brief description is given in the past tense, as it will be recollected that the theatre was lately destroyed by fire. The interior was remarkable for the elegance of its spheroidical form.

Winkle were quite well; and when answered in the affirmative, they simultaneously declared, that, for their parts, they were never better.

The punch was now served out to the party; and Mr. Pickwick determined to commence his exhortation so soon as it should have taken the effect of putting those, whom he intended with his characteristic wisdom and foresight, to reclaim, into a good humour.

"Here's to you, Sir," said Mr. Knackers.

"Better luck to us all," cried Mr. Porrett; and the two gentlemen emptied their glasses at a draught.

"Have you been unfortunate, then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick in a very sentimentaltone of voice.

"I should rather think so," answered Mr. Porrett. "Was'nt I wolloped by young Irish Bill down there at Reading last year? and didn't I stand a chance of going to the Floating Academy at Woolwich for killing the Kidderminster favourite?"

"Ah! you and I have seen someat in our lives, Ben," moralized Mr. Knackers. "I was only a small infant when my first public exhibition at the cart's tail took place, and through no fault of mine. It was all along of my sister which stole the goose and laid it to me."

"The Floating Academy means the hulks, Sir:" whispered Mr. Weller to his master. "Wery amusin' chaps, ain't they?"

"Very," said Mr. Pickwick, drily.

"This punch is rather strong," said Mr. Winkle, by way of saying something.

"Are you one of the fancy, Sir," enquired Mr. Porrett, addressing himself to Mr. Winkle.

"Who? I—Oh! no," answered that gentleman, starting as if his interrogator had actually explained himself more fully by pitching into him right and left, to use the select phraseology of prize-fighters.

"What a loss you have had to experience, then!" said Mr. Porrett, shaking his head in mournful commiseration.

"Nor you, Sir?" enquired Mr. Knackers of Mr. Pickwick.

"I have not that pleasure," was the answer.

"Why, where do you come from?" demanded Mr. Knackers.

"From London, Sir," replied Mr. Pickwick; and the two prize-fighters burst out into a violent fit of laughter.

"My mas'ers is gen'lemen as has had wery little experience in them things," observed Mr. Weller; "but if so be you're wery anxious at this per-cise moment to discover any thing to prac-tise upon, vy I'm your man, as the bear said ven he hugged the old lady to death."

"Sam," cried Mr. Pickwick; "remember my injunctions; and you, gentlemen, do me the favour to listen to a friend to humanity. I am old enough to be your father."

"So you are, old boy," ejaculated Mr. Knackers.

"And I speak to you as I would to my own children," continued Mr. Pickwick.

"There's no mistake about that," cried Mr. Porrett.

"You are both strong and fine men," said Mr. Pickwick, prudently appealing to their feelings through the medium of flattering their vanity; "you are both strong and fine men—"

"So the Kidderminster pet said when I knocked his eye out," interrupted Mr. Porrett.

"And it is terrible to see you mutulate yourselves in such a degrading system of warfare," added the learned orator.

"I recollect the old magistrate making the very same observation when he fined me fifteen bob for assaulting a cab-man," observed Mr. Knackers.

"Consider the course of life you are pursuing, my friends," resumed Mr. Pickwick, as he filled the glasses round; "drinking, rioting, swearing—"

"Well upon my word, you do it uncommonly well, now," exclaimed Mr. Porrett; "I'm certain you're one of us, and all this preaching is in fun. Ha! ha! talking against drinking just as you fill the glasses! Capital—eh? ain't it, Knackers?"

Mr. Knackers replied in the affirmative; and as both those gentlemen firmly believed that Mr. Pickwick's moral injunctions had only emanated in the desire of amusement, they told him to "hold his cursed jaw" when he prepared to continue his discourse; and requested Mr. Winkle to favour them with a song. With this solicitation, Mr. Winkle could not however comply; and so Mr. Porrett proposed that he should put on the gloves. This suggestion threw Mr. Knackers into convulsions of laughter; and William, the waiter, having produced the boxing-gloves, Mr. Winkle's hands were plunged into them in a moment, and he himself was led into the middle of the room, where a ring was immediately formed by the other frequenters of the tavern who were present; and Mr. Porrett prepared to spar with him.

These movements were so suddenly resolved upon, and so quickly executed, that Mr. Pickwick was incapacitated by actual astonishment from interfering in his friend's behalf; and Mr. Weller, in obedience to his master's previous orders, did not himself venture to meddle with any thing that was passing. Indeed, a malicious commentator upon this circumstance slily observes, that Sam gladly availed himself of his master's injunction as an excuse for not putting an immediate termination to the amusement.

"Now then, look sharp," roared Mr. Porrett; and he began sparring away like clockwork.

Mr. Winkle instinctively raised his hands to protect his face; and as he accidentally placed them in a very good position, Mr. Porrett's admiration of his opponent's science was not a little excited.

"Go it, my boys," roared three or four English mechanics who were present.

"That's a rummy one," cried Mr. Knackers, as Mr. Porrett dropped his right glove into Mr. Winkle's left eye, and then just touched Mr. Winkle with his left hand under the right ear.

"Sam!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, at length recovering the use of his speech;" call in the police."

"It's all over now, Sir," very coolly remarked that individual, just as Mr. Porrett levelled Mr. Winkle gently and quietly with the ground.

But at that moment the police, without waiting to be called in at all, made its appearance in the shape of a town-serjeant, who, passing by the place at the time, and hearing a dreadful disturbance within, thought it prudent to investigate the particulars of the riot. As soon as the official cocked hat was descried, Mr. Knackers and Mr. Porrett plumped down into their places, and resumed their attacks upon the punch, as if they had being doing nothing else for the preceding two hours; Mr. Pickwick commenced an harangue in English, to exculpate both his friend and domestic; Mr. Winkle sought concealment and refuge in the first place that presented itself conveniently to his view; and Mr. Samuel Weller bestowed a gracious and patronizing nod upon the police-officer, who, finding that there was nothing to occupy his official attention, took a drop of brandy at the bar, paid for it, chucked the girl, who served him, under the chin, and then strolled leisurely out of the tavern.

"Now, then, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, "I have had enough of these gentlemen and of your friends' society. Let us return home at once. Where is Mr. Winkle?"

Mr. Weller made use of his eyes, but Mr. Winkle was no where to be seen.

"This is very odd," continued Mr. Pickwick; "I am certain he did not depart by the door."

"Mr. Vinkle! Mr. Vinkle!" cried Sam: "vhere be you? The Johnny Darmy 's gone, and now you may make your appearance vith all manners o' safety."

"I'm here!" cried a distant and very melancholy voice.

"Where?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Vhere?" shouted Mr. Weller.

"Here," returned the voice; then in a moment another "here!" was uttered a little more plainly; and, in the course of half a minute, a pair of legs descended from the chimney.

"What! is that you, Winkle?" said Mr. Pickwick, uncertain whether to believe his eyes.

"Yes — here I am;" answered that gentleman; and, in another second, the entire form of the illustrious Pickwickian emerged from the chimney, all besmeared with soot and dirt, and with the boxing gloves still upon his hands.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, surveying his luckless friend from top to toe: "do you really mean to say, Sir, that you crept up the chimney?"

"Alas! my dear and kind friend," said Mr. Winkle, in a very plaintive and tragical tone of voice, "pardon a moment of weakness, and believe that the fear of figuring in a police-office alone drove me to that retreat. Think of what Arabella's feelings would have been!"

Mr. Pickwick was softened by this demonstration of his companion's contrition and distress: Mr. Winkle saw the advantage he had gained; and, in order to follow it up, was about to precipitate himself into his great leader's arms. But Mr. Pickwick fell back a few paces in the

most unmitigated horror; and Mr. Winkle at length remembered the predicament in which the aërial journey up the chimney had placed him.

"You could not think that I was really afraid?" cried Mr. Winkle, again appealing to Mr. Pickwick.

"Why, to tell you the truth," began that gentleman, "appearances are somewhat —"

"Oh! do not trust to appearances," interrupted Mr. Winkle; "appearances are often very deceitful."

"I don't think as how you could wery vell say that, if so be some von vos to come for'ard to tell you that you'd bin up a chimbly," observed Mr. Weller.

"Believe me," continued Mr. Winkle, "that if any one were to menace your safety, my dear Pickwick—if you stood in the least danger, in fine—I should be the first to dare all to succour you. I only wish that an opportunity would occur to put my valour in your behalf to the test: you should see how readily I would rush forward—forgetting all danger—"

Mr. Winkle, who happened at this moment to glance towards the door, stopped short in the midst of his fine and eloquent discourse, turned deadly pale, and then with one bound reached the chimney, up which he was preparing to climb a second time. But Mr. Weller caught him by the skirt of his coat, and dragged him back; while Mr. Pickwick, alarmed at this sudden panic on the part of his young friend, glanced towards the entrance of the tavern, to ascertain the reason of his terror. A couple of gendarmes were lounging outside, but evidently in a pacific manner, and without any hostile intention. Some time however elapsed before Mr. Winkle could be persuaded that no harm was being meditated against him. Mr. Weller was despatched to summons a hackney coach, and the adventures of the evening terminated by the return of that individual and his masters to their apartments in the Rue Royale.

"It is very disagreeable to meet with such opposition, when one is desirous of doing good actions and reforming society," observed Mr. Pickwick, as he sate down to supper.

"So George the Third said, Sir, ven they ac-vitted Took and Thelvall," exclaimed Mr. Weller.

"But of all persons to reform, prize-fighters are decidedly the worst," cried Mr. Winkle.

"Nice young chaps for a small tea-party, them there is," remarked Mr. Weller.

"I should rather think you meant a hot-punch party," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Vy, yes, Sir — I does n't think as how they're wery likely to trouble Bohay much," returned Sam: "strong drinks is best for strong men, they say; milk-an'-vater for babbies."

"Is that the case, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Vithout doubt, Sir," was the prompt reply.

"Then bring us a couple of bottles of Madeira, Sam," added Mr. Pickwick, without a moment's hesitation.

CHAPTER LVII.

A PIC-NIC PARTY TO ROMAINVILLE WOOD.—MR. TUPMAN AND THE PEASANT GIRL.—THE NEWSPAPER.—THE DINNER, THE DANCE, AND OTHER INTERESTING PARTICULARS.

THE summer months arrived in due time, and with the singing of birds came the season for pic-nic parties. Our heroes had heard much of the Bois de Romainville as well as of the beauties of the country in the neighbourhood of Belleville; and, upon the suggestion of Mr Winkle, it was agreed to form a party and ruralise a little in those bewitching regions.

The twenty-ninth of May is now famous in history for two remarkable events; viz. the Restoration of King Charles the Second, and the pic-nic which the heroes of these Memoirs formed in Romainville Wood. The whole affair had been well digested and planned the evening before. The party were to proceed in a couple of carriages as far as the Barrier of the Foubourg du Temple, and thence walk to the place of recreation; it being an old-established rule in all pic-nics and country excursions that the company must fatigue themselves as much as possible in order to enjoy the fresh air of the fields and groves. Mr. Kallaway, who had frequently attended similar parties on former occasions, undertook to superintend the management of this one. He accordingly began by stating that they might take all their eatables with them; but that it was usual to purchase the wine of the gamekeeper, who, on account of the numerous demands upon him, sold very excellent liquors. Mr. Pickwick gave his cook orders to prepare a cold collation, and Mr. Scuttle contributed a Perigord pie which he purchased himself at Chevet's in the Palais Royal.

The auspicious morning dawned, and at nine o'clock two hackney-coaches were fetched to the door by Mr. Weller, whose hat inclined more gracefully over his left ear than ever. Into the first jumped Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Scuttle, Mr. Kallaway, and Mr. Tupman; and into the second leapt Mr. Snodgrass, Mr. Winkle, Mr. Chitty, and Mr. Walker. Mr. Weller mounted the dickey of the vehicle which contained his master, and the cavalcade was set in motion.

"What was that basket you gave Sam to take care of?" enquired Mr. Pickwick of Mr. Kalloway, as the equipage rolled up the Boulevards des Italiens—those Boulevards that are alike the lounge for the fashionable, the great, and the gay—the *rendez-vous* of lovers and of politicians—the garden in the midst of a mighty city—the seat of the old defences of Paris—the scene of *fêtes* and of revolutions—the walk that supplies foliage to protect the cheek of beauty from the glare of the sun, and trees to form barricades on the dethronement of a king—the promenade of the unfortunate girl and of the high-born lady—the place where theatres and cafés form the principal buildings—the locality which is the first noticed by the stranger on his arrival in Paris—the wide street whence branch those narrow ones that lead

to the fashionable quarters of the Chaussée d'Antin on one side, and to the commercial regions of the Exchange on the other—the spot chosen by charlatans to harangue their dupes, and by speculators to discuss the prices of stock and of merchandise—the universal resort, in fine, of the youug and the old, the happy and the miserable, the gambler at Frescati's and the gambler on the Exchange, the reader and the editor of the daily newspaper, the Frenchman and the foreigner, the man proud of himself, and the one of whom others are proud, and of all that miscellaneous multitude which throngs in great cities. but especially in Paris.

We must however remind the reader that Mr. Pickwick has asked a question.

"Why—I'll tell you the truth," answered Mr. Kallaway. "I had a pig killed the day before yesterday—the loveliest animal you'd ever wish to set your eyes on—such a spare-rib! Jem Brown, who lives in the Batignolles, told William Humphries, the English farmer at St. Germain-en-laye, of whom I buy all my pigs, that it was quite a treat to see the pig stuck—the knife had to go through such a quantity of fat."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick: 'it must have been very interesting."

"Beats a play any day," cried Mr. Kallaway. "But, about the basket, I think it was, we were speaking. Now—you'll never guess what it contains."

"Pig's feet, perhaps," said Mr. Pickwick.

"No: guess again," cried Mr. Kallaway.

"A cold leg of pork, I shouldn't wonder," suggested Mr. Tupman.

"I thought I should puzzle you," ejaculated Mr. Kallaway, with a triumphant smile. "It contains a large pork-pie—a cold spare-rib—and some black-puddings, which the game-keeper can cook, if we choose to have any thing hot."

"It's very lucky there are no Jews amongst us," observed Mr.

Scuttle. "But one *will* make mistakes every now and then. I recollect many years ago committing a strange blunder: I was going to send a sucking pig to a widow lady of my acquaintance (she was uncommonly fond of sucking pigs) and a dozen bottles of excellent milk punch to a gentleman of the Jewish persuasion to whom I lay under an obligation: and what do you think I did?"

"Ate the one and drank the others yourself, perhaps," suggested Mr. Pickwick.

"No—but I forwarded the pig to the Jew, and the punch to the lady," added Mr. Scuttle.

"How disagreeable!" cried Mr. Pickwick.

"Very," said Mr. Scuttle; "but the best of it was, that the Jew was mortally offended, and the lady uncommonly well pleased with the presents."

In such edifying conversation as this, the time was passed agreeably away in the first vehicle, and in a similar manner in the second, until the party arrived at the Barrier, where they dismissed the coaches, and had recourse to their feet, Mr. Weller carrying a couple of enormous baskets on his arms.

"This stroll will sharpen our appetites," said Mr. Walker, who, according to his invariable system, already began to think of eating and drinking.

"What a subject for the meditations of the poet!" ejaculated Mr. Snodgrass, casting enraptured glances around him.

"Yes—" said Mr. Kallaway, "all those houses that you see, both on your right hand and on your left, are offices or places to sell wine and spirits."

"How interesting is it to behold those lovely innocents disporting in all the joyousness of youth;" cried Mr. Snodgrass, whose sentimental feelings were again excited by the prospect of two children playing in the gutter.

"I enjoy this walk above any thing," observed Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his shoulders to assuage the pain of a severe blow which two men who were carrying a small cask had given him: "the farther we advance, the more I perceive that we are coming into the country: the very air proclaims it."

These remarks made a deep impression upon the whole party; especially as it was something new to be informed that the farther you walk from the centre of a city, the nearer you are to its suburbs; and more particularly still—in reference to the fresh air—because at the moment Mr. Pickwick was speaking, they were passing an extensive stabling and waggon-office establishment, from which an uncommon odour of cart-horses was exhaling.

"Mind you don't shake the provisions, Sam," said Mr. Hook Walker, with an imploring accent.

"P'rhaps you'd like to carry the baskits yourself, Sir," returned Mr. Weller: "cos if you does, I von't deprive you of the pleasure. Change and change about is a wery good rule, as the chaps says at the treadmill."

"No thank you, Sam," exclaimed Mr. Hook Walker, by no means

satisfied with the proposal: "I'm sure the food cannot be in better hands than your's."

"Nor in a better mouth than your'n, Sir," rejoined Mr. Weller. "Eatin' and drinkin' comes wery nat'ral to a man, sure-ly, as the beggar said to the magistrate ven he wos accused o' stealin' a loaf. Wittles is in, cares is out."

"There's a very fine peasant girl yonder," observed Mr. Tupman to Mr. Winkle.

"Where?" demanded that gentleman.

"On the donkey there," said Mr. Tupman. "I've a good mind to go and speak a few words to her; I know enough French now for that—and in the country, you are aware, every thing is allowable."

"Certainly," coincided Mr. Winkle; and as the party at this moment turned into the fields under the direction of Mr. Kallaway, Mr. Tupman no longer hesitated about the matter.

He accordingly ran after the donkey as fast as he could carry himself along. The peasant girl, seeing herself pursued by a fat gentleman, burst out into a violent fit of laughter, and urged her animal into a comfortable little gallop, which, as Mr. Weller observed, was more eligible as good exercise than pleasant as a recreation. Mr. Tupman's friends were all in an excellent humour, and inclined to indulge in any little harmless frolic which presented itself; and so they encouraged him by their shouts and cries to proceed.

Mr. Tupman, with the perspiration pouring down his animated countenance, gained rapidly upon the donkey; and at length overtook the equipage, just as he was ready to drop with fatigue. But at the instant when he approached the fair peasant girl, and was about to address a compliment to her beauty which he had planned as he ran after her, the donkey wheeled suddenly round, and raised its hind legs in consequence of a blow it's shoulders received from its rider. Now as the movements of Mr. Tupman did not correspond with those of the ass, he experienced the full force of its heels just upon his coat-tails, and was propelled with amazing ease and velocity into a ditch, while the peasant galloped off convulsed with laughter.

Forlorn and miserable, Mr. Tupman extricated himself from his unpleasant predicament, and managed to wipe the mud from his trousers on the grass, by the time his friends came to his assistance. He however endeavoured to put a good face upon the matter; but his countenance was too long to be sweet, and he could not suppress a wish that the donkey and the peasant might find their ways to the abode of Lucifer in each other's company.

"Nothin' like a country ex-cursion, Sir," said Mr. Weller, by way of consoling the discomfited gentleman: "wot larks von *does* have! There ain't no excitement vithout danger, as the lady said ven she ran away from the mad-bull."

"You are not hurt, I hope," cried Mr. Winkle, with difficulty suppressing a smile.

"If these are the rural sports that Snodgrass talks of sometimes," returned Mr. Tupman, "I think they might be more agreeable."

"Patience, my dear friend," cried Mr. Pickwick, "and —"

"And what?" demanded Mr. Tupman, manifesting very little of the article recommended by his great leader.

"And your trousers will soon be dry," added Mr. Pickwick.

"You won't take cold—*tollere frigidum*," exclaimed Mr. Chitty: "a little run—*parvus curro*—will soon remedy all the evil you have sustained."

The party accordingly pursued their way, under the guidance of Mr. Kallaway, who purposely took them by a circuitous route in order, as he observed, to extend the walk and make it more agreeable.

"I cannot say that I admire those kinds of sports," remarked Mr. Hook Walker, "particularly as it is a part of a donkey's system to kick."

"How very fortunate it is that Tupman hadn't the basket in his hand at the time," said Mr. Kallaway, "or else we should have lost the pork-pie and the black-puddings."

"Wot a wery great pity that vould ha' been," cried Mr. Weller, with a solemn shake of the head: "if Mr. Tupman had been drownded or sufficated, that vould ha' been nothin' to the spilin' o' the sassages. A wery narrer escape it where, to be sure, as the actriss said ven they sent her the hinfernal machine."

"What was that, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"A most extra-extraordinary tale, Sir," was the reply.

"You may tell it, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, "if you like."

"Vy, Sir," said Mr. Weller, gladly availing himself of his master's permission, "this wos the truth o' the story. A wery celebrated actriss, as wos about fifty year of age, and had been a precious gay o'oman in her time, married a young chap—a foolish young feller, vich she cotched hold on, cos he wos so wery soft—an' as they saw that her popilarity wos all on the decline, they determined to have recourse to some precious qveer start to excite public feelin' in her faviour. Old vimen is up to strange tricks; cos ven charms is gone, then wexations begins; an' so it wos vith this 'ere couple; for not von o' the thousand and von lovyers as this wery amorous o'oman had had, vould notice her in her old age. 'Ven the devil is old, he turns 'ermit,' says they; an' sure enow this where the case vith her. Howmsoever, she married—vent to Americky—vos hooted out o' the place—and come back to England, to take in John Bull. But all vouldn't do; and so she's up to a trick. She gets a hinfernal machine sent to her, like that von vich Fi-eschi sent to Lewery Philip some time ago; and bribed a wery brave gen'leman in the carpent'ring line to kick it open. Her husband, he pertended to be in a devil of a vay, and there wos the most precious kick-up as ever you'd vish for to see. Vell, the box wos opened, an' a little gunpowder was discovered in it. So the whole thing got put into the papers; an' a stupid feller of a magistrate pertended it wos all right, an' that he knew all about the willins as played the trick, an' a lot more gammon in the same vay. Wery great wos the success as attended on this here dis-play, cos it filled the theayter. But a wery great newspaper tvigs it all, and proves to con-wiction that it wos a hoax. A hoax, you know, Sir, is a piece o' gammon; an

that's vy von o' the principal races at Epsom is called the hoax.* So the young feller as married this old o'oman, wos uncommon wexed at this; and he wrote letters to the paper. But the paper only put 'em in vith notes o' their own, to per-sist in statin' their conwiction as it wos a gammon. So at last it wos wery vell ascertained, an' proved, an' probated, an' every man as has the least understandin' at all wery vell knowed that the whole thing wos nonsense: cos in the fust place the o'oman wos too old and faded to be the hobject o' jealousy; an' her faviours had been so wery videly distributed that no man could ha' been angry vith her for the vant on 'em. It wosn't nat'ral, Sir, as the owerseer observed ven the pauper told him he could eat two meals a-day; an' tho' the waliant carpenter as broke the box, took to his bed, and the young fool o' a husband took all manner o' pains to con-wince the public that it wos all right, it wos no go — the thing wos as rotten as a old tree — and the poor silly o'oman got nothin' but con-tempt for her pains. There's food for jaw-vork, Sir, as the chaps says vich sells nuts in the streets."

"That's a very remarkable story, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, when the anecdote was thus brought to a conclusion.

"Wery, Sir," coincided Mr. Weller.

"*Morsor morsus*—the biter bit," observed Mr. Chitty, who had attentively listened to the narrative.

"Eh, I des say it is, Sir," remarked Mr. Weller; "but I doesn understand Greek, an' so the beauties o' them there obserwations o' your'n is qvite lost on me, as the deaf man said ven the beggar-o'oman come singin' underneath his vinder."

In a very short time, the party reached the Bois de Romainville; and Mr. Kallaway led the way to a convenient spot, where he and his companions all sate down to rest themselves after their walk.

"It is only twelve o'clock," said Mr. Pickwick, referring to his watch; "and we can scarcely dine before two. What shall we do in the meantime?"

"I shall smoke a cigar," observed Mr. Scuttle; and taking a case from his pocket, he extracted therefrom a real Havannah and materials for striking a light.

"And I shall see that the provisions are all safe," said Mr. Kallaway. "I hope the pork-pie is not broken at all."

"I thinks as how you'll be wery vell saytisfied, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, "vith the state o' the larder. But pies isn't made o' iron, an' like heggs, they're wery soon broke."

"G— bless me!" shouted Mr. Scuttle; "what have I done?"— and the excellent gentleman rubbed his lips with the back of his hand, and made a grimace indicative of anything but pleasure.

"What *have* you done?" cried Mr. Pickwick.

"Why—I began to smoke the amadue, and threw away the cigar," returned Mr. Scuttle.

"*Absentia mentis*—absence of mind," coolly remarked Mr. Chitty.

* Query "Oaks."—*Printer's Devil.*

"It's a part of his system," muttered Mr. Walker.

"This is rather tedious—sitting here, doing nothing," said Mr. Tupman; "and I am too tired to walk."

"What paper is that you've got in your hand, Sam?" enquired Mr. Pickwick of his valet.

"The *Non-Such*, Sir," answered that gentleman. "I took it to read, thinkin' that ve should be rayther dull till dinner-time. Most people generally is."

"Let me look at it, Sam," continued Mr. Pickwick; and having satisfied himself that the Journal was not above a week old, he ventured an opinion that its contents might probably wile away an hour or so, and prepared to read accordingly.

"Let's hear the news," cried Mr. Walker, anxious to do anything to dissipate the time.

"Read it aloud," suggested Mr. Kallaway.

"*Pro bono publico*," cried Mr. Chitty, "which properly means for the good of all the people in the public-house."

"I will," said Mr. Pickwick; and he cast his eyes over the paper to obtain an idea of the general nature of the contents. "Here's 'Brutal conduct of a Policeman,'—'Dreadful accident, attended with loss of life,'—'Murderous Assault.'—'Explosion of Gunpowder,'—"

"Let us have *that*," exclaimed Mr. Kallaway, attracted by the title of the paragraph.

Mr. Pickwick read the passage accordingly:—

"EXPLOSION OF GUNPOWDER!—An accident that might have plunged an amiable man and a loving family into the deepest distress, has lately occurred at Upper Wokesworth. Mr. Guffins, the eminent pork-butcher, of that town, is the gentleman to whom we allude. It appears that Mr. Guffins was trying a new gun which he had lately purchased, and the powder exploded in his face. He was taken up in a state of insensibility, and upon a medical man being fetched, it was feared that he would for ever be deprived of his sight. He was however induced to try Grimstone's Aromatic Snuff; and having used two boxes at 1s. 4d., his perfect recovery was effected."

"How very remarkable!" cried Mr. Tupman. "But what is that long article which I see the *None-Such* has reprinted from another paper?"

"Which—'Consumption Curable?'" said Mr. Pickwick; "or 'Turnpikes in Danger under the existing Ministry?'"

"No—'The State of the Navy,'" answered Mr. Tupman; and he pointed to the paragraph which he had noticed over Mr. Pickwick's shoulder.

"Oh! very well," observed the great man; and he accordingly read the following article for the behoof of his audience and himself:—

"PRESENT STATE OF THE NAVY.—A numerous meeting was held at the *Tar-Barrel and Kilderkin*, on Friday last, to take into consideration the present dilapidated state of the Thames' Navy. The

meeting was most respectably attended by all the eminent coal-barge and collier-proprietors, and operatives in the vicinity of Wapping. Mr. Tuggs was unanimously called to the chair.

"Mr. Tuggs, in a most admirable speech, informed the meeting of the motives for which they had met. He said that the Thames' Navy was in a most ruinous condition; and that the small encouragement given to the great maritime speculators of the country by the existing government was the cause. He himself had formerly employed a man and a boy to each barge; and now he could scarcely afford to keep the boy. He had long ago discharged the man; and the boys rowed the barges. *(Considerable excitement.)* The number of his barges had also been reduced. He had formerly possessed eleven; but two had been swamped, and his establishment was consequently reduced to nine. Could that meeting suffer such a state of things to last? *(No! no!)* The national flag had been moreover insulted. One of his own barges had been run down by a French fishing-vessel off Blackwall; and the fishing-boat, instead of returning to London, and paying for the damage it had occasioned, hoisted all sail and escaped. He should like to know what explanation the French government could give in such a matter? He repeated it—the English flag had been insulted! *(Hisses and groans.)* But that was not all. There were other grievances which it was his painful duty to narrate. An English sailor had been arrested on board an English ship in Calais-harbour, and imprisoned in the gaol of Calais-town! *(Tremendous uproar.)* That English sailor was his own nephew! *(Increased excitement.)* Yes—his own nephew!! And why had he been arrested? For knocking down a French custom-officer, who dared to search his vessel. Good G—! was *that* the conduct of a civilised nation, or of a race of barbarians? Was that the behaviour of a friendly power? *(No! no!)* His nephew had manfully resisted the Gendarmes who went to arrest him, and nearly killed one of them with a cutlass, while he pointed to the English flag flying at the mast-head of the cutter! For this gallant defence of his own rights, he was ignominiously conducted to gaol; and when an immense quantity of cotton was discovered carefully stowed away in the hold, he was tried—condemned—and sentenced to six months' imprisonment by the barbarous laws of savage and blood-thirsty France! *(Groans.)* He (Mr. Tuggs) had laid the whole transaction before the Admiralty, and had received no reply to his communication. Thus injury was added at home to insult experienced abroad. And what was the state of the Government Receiving Ships in the Thames? What was to be seen upon their decks? Why—old women, hanging up clothes to dry! Could the nation at large be aware of these facts? Or would this exposure excite public attention? His firm conviction was, that Government knew more about the mysterious disappearance of the dung-barge, on board of which it was proved there was a drunken man at the time it left Pooke's Wharf, than Government chose to acknowledge? *(Tremendous sensation—particularly amongst the operative coal-heavers and bargemen.)* One of the Lord Mayor's barges had lately been the scene of a terrible catastrophe. An old female who had been employed in cleansing it, was found by her

husband dead on board. She had died of apoplexy—brought on by excessive drinking. But what had caused her to drink to such an extent? Why—grief at the lowness of the wages she was to receive for her labour: grief, he maintained, and the fear of seeing a large family starving around her, on her return home in the evening, had led her to commit the terrible deed! (*Expressions of horror.*) He would not detain them many minutes longer; but he should propose that any despatches connected with the affair concerning the old woman, that might have been received from her husband, should be produced before the Committee, which that meeting would doubtless nominate to petition Parliament and watch over their maritime interests.

"At this stage of the business, a man, whose feelings were so excited as nearly to deprive him of the power of utterance, stepped forward and said that he was the bereaved husband to whom allusion had just been made. Neither he nor his wife could write; and so there were no despatches to produce: but he observed that the last news he had heard of his wife, while alive, was from the pot-boy of a public-house, who informed him that he had just carried another quartern of gin to his wife, and that she had given him a good whacking because he had spilt some on the way. The poor fellow added, with tears in his eyes, that his deceased wife had pawned and sold every thing to obtain liquor, and that it was a sad thing to be deprived of her after they had lived together for so many years."

"Is that all?" inquired Mr. Tupman, as Mr. Pickwick laid the paper upon the grass.

"It merely observes that the reporter left while Mr. Tripes of Whitechapel was addressing the meeting at great length, in reply to some observations of a personal character which had fallen from Mr. Priggy, the pawnbroker," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"I should think we might dine now," cried Mr. Hook Walker.

"*Quale tempus?* what is the time?" demanded Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"Just two," answered Mr. Pickwick. "Now, Sam—lay the cloth, and let us begin our dinner."

"Have you got a dish for the pork-pie?" asked Mr. Kallaway.

"I raythér thinks as how ve can manage that," replied Mr. Weller; and in a very solemn and mechanical fashion he proceeded to arrange the various viands upon the cloth, while Mr. Kallaway, having satisfied himself that the pork-pie, the cold spare-rib, and the other matters were all safe, repaired to the house of the game-keeper close by to procure wine and get the black-puddings cooked. In half an hour he returned, followed by the game-keeper's two boys, laden with bottles and bearing the choice dish. Things having been thus satisfactorily arranged, the repast commenced.

"What do you think of the pork-pie?" said Mr. Kallaway to Mr. Winkle. "Wasn't Jem Brown right in all he told that Humphries about the pig?"

"He was indeed," returned Mr. Winkle.

"I—I think these black-puddings have a very queer flavour,' ob-

served Mr. Tupman; and in order to corroborate his assertion, he made a very queer face.

"Oh! I dare say they have," very coolly replied Mr. Kallaway, helping himself to one of the articles thus cavilled at: "I had them fried in garlic sauce, and that is what you taste, ten to one."

And Mr. Kallaway would have made a very safe wager, had he laid a hundred to one; for it *was* the garlic which had disagreed with Mr. Tupman's stomach; and that gentleman was under the necessity of drinking a large tumbler of wine to eradicate the noxious flavour.

Mr. Scuttle had risen to draw the cork of a bottle, while Sam was absent with the game-keeper's boys to procure some more wine; and as the cork was rather obstinate, Mr. Scuttle was obliged to use all his force to draw it. At length he succeeded; but the violence of the exertion, and the abruptness with which the cork yielded to his energies, gave his equilibrium so sudden an impetus, that the unfortunate gentleman lost his balance, fell upon Mr. Kallaway's pork-pie, overturned the dish of black-puddings, and rolled over a salad-bowl into Mr. Winkle's lap.

"For G—'s sake take care of the pie!" shouted Mr. Kallaway, in an agony of alarm.

"Thank heavens for one thing," ejaculated Mr. Hook Walker; "the fillet of veal is not hurt. I've only just begun my dinner."

He had not as yet eaten more than about two pounds and a half of meat, with ham and bread in proportion; so if that were a beginning, it is somewhat difficult to ascertain what he would call the middle or the ending of his meal. Mr. Scuttle was now raised from his awkward situation, and order was once more established, as Mr. Weller and the boys made their appearance with a fresh supply of wine.

"What box is that which you have under your arm, Sam?" inquired Mr. Pickwick of Mr. Weller.

"Vy, Sir, 'tis a box o' comfiturs," answered that gentleman, "vich the game-keeper told me ud be exceedin' pleasant at dessert. There ain't no gammon about this box as there was about that concernin' vich I told you the story as it happened to the wery notorious actriss. 'Tis reglar genivine, as Brett says of his brandy."

"So much the better, Sam," returned Mr. Pickwick; and as Mr. Walker had by this time *finished* the cold veal, in the most literal sense in which that verb can be used, the dinner was removed to an adjacent bank for the behoof of Mr. Weller, and the company entered upon the discussion of the fruits and wines which had lately arrived.

While his masters were thus diverting themselves, Mr. Weller partook of the sustenance which had been left by those gentlemen; and as he had no one to talk to during his repast, he regaled himself with a little vocal harmony, which sounded through the wood, and disturbed the echoes in the silent retreats of the grove. And these were the words of his song.

SONG.

The fust thing in life a young man should consider,
Is vether to marry a spinster or vidder;—

But let him make haste and decide vich to choose,
'Cos ven there's two stools, then your balance you lose,
An' fall 'twixt 'em both ;—the old proverb's vell known,
As the gen'leman said ven he broke his back-bone.

A wery sad matter it is that a vife
Is von o' them evils ve're heirs to in life ;—
Tho' vimen is usually wixens and flirts,
Yet—bless 'em—they mends all our stockins an' shirts.
You must have a *flame* (vether vidder or spinster)
As the maniac said ven he burnt the York Minster.

"I don't know no more o' that there," said Mr. Weller to himself, as he left off singing and recommenced eating: "but I des say the rest is wery pretty. Blowed if the guv'ner aint got up now to make a speech; an' Mr. Vinkle's begun smokin' cigars. However—nothin' like a little rational diwersion, as the chaps says ven they jumps in sacks. This cold pie ain't by no means amiss; and them sperets might be wusser: so, I don't see no reason vy I shouldn't drink the health o' the principal person at the side table—an' that's myself. Here's a health to you, Mr. Samivel Veller—long life—a merry Christmas, ven it comes—health to your old father, vife, and babbies—an' ven you runs arter fortun', I vish as how you may catch her, as the boys says to each other ven they soaps the pig's-tail and tries vich shall get hold on it fust at the country fair."

Having brought this soliloquy to a conclusion, Mr. Weller tossed off a bumper of brandy-and-water, and then leisurely proceeded to pack up the crockery and the remnants of the dinner in his two baskets.

The gentlemen had partaken pretty freely of the game-keeper's wine, and even the beaming eyes of Mr. Pickwick sparkled with more than usual vivacity through his spectacles, when, about half-past five o'clock the sound of music fell upon their ears.

"The peasants are going to dance opposite the game-keeper's house," said Mr. Kallaway; "and there are some very pretty girls amongst them too."

"Are there indeed?" exclaimed Mr. Tupman, jumping on his feet, "I rather think I shall join them for half an hour or so."

"Come along," cried Mr. Scuttle. "Thank G—, there is no chance of my making such a mistake to-day as I did some weeks ago, —when I put my white kid gloves on my feet, and shoved my hands into my shoes, as I hastily finished dressing for a ball."

"A dance upon the village green is fraught with the very essence of sentimentality," observed Mr. Snodgrass.

"I dare say the keeper could give us some information about the game," said Mr. Winkle.

"That vouldn't be at all astonishin', Sir—beg pardon," remarked Mr. Weller, touching his hat, and coughing to conceal a sly laugh.

Mr. Pickwick saw that his friends were desirous of joining in the dance of the peasants; he accordingly intimated his readiness to accompany them to the scene of amusement. Mr. Kallaway put himself at the head of the party; and in a very few minutes they arrived at the place where the village swains and peasant-girls were dancing.

Mr. Tupman and Mr. Snodgrass soon obtained the fair hands of two buxom lasses, who just comprehended that they were invited to dance by the *Messieurs Anglais;* and while the former invented compliments, and the latter talked of poetry, and shepherdesses, and sylvan retreats, in the best French they could call to their aid, for the amusement of their partners, those young ladies replied by the most exhilirating peals of laughter. Mr. Winkle entered into a species of conversation with the game-keeper, of which neither understood ten words spoken by each other; and thus their discourse was highly interesting and amusing. Mr. Scuttle smoked a cigar—Mr. Walker drank brandy—Mr. Chitty took a nap upon a green bank close by—Mr. Weller cocked his hat on one side, and at length joined in the dance —and Mr. Pickwick stood and chatted to Mr. Walker and Mr. Kallaway.

"How they seem to enjoy themselves!" observed Mr. Pickwick, his countenance glowing with philanthropy.

"It almost makes one feel as if he were but one or two and twenty," remarked Mr. Kallaway.

"So it does," said Mr. Pickwick; and the learned man cut a caper in the air. "Upon my word," he added slowly—"I have a very great mind to——"

"To what?" demanded Mr. Walker. "Join me in a glass of grog, eh?"

"No—to take a little rational and innocent exercise," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"Well," said Mr. Walker, "the system is both a good and an easy one. You may run three times round the house, for instance—or climb up a tree—or romp with the girls."

"Suppose you choose a partner, and figure away with the young ones," suggested the good-natured Mr. Kallaway. "My father-in-law, old Clumley, danced when he was sixty-five—that was the same year in which he was bankrupt."

"I really think I will follow your advice," said Mr. Pickwick; and perceiving at the moment he was speaking, an exceedingly fat and comely peasant-girl, eating macaroons and drinking whey at a little table before the game-keeper's lodge, he no longer hesitated about the matter, but tripped gaily and lightly up to the aforesaid young lady, and was accepted as her partner for the new quadrille that was about to commence.

"Vell, this is a go!" said Mr. Weller to himself, when he perceived the intentions of his master. "Blowed if it don't beat the small tea-parties at Vhite Conduit House all to shivers! Wot qveer things ve does in our old hage, as my gran'mother observed ven she played vith a rattle."

But the dance commenced; and Mr. Pickwick was as active and light as any one present. He cut a thousand new capers, performed a variety of pirouettes never before attempted, and excited the admiration of the peasants to such an extent, that they were convulsed with laughter throughout the quadrille. Mr. Tupman endeavoured to imitate that illustrious leader who did all things so well; and, if we except one fall which the gallant Tracy sustained as he turned some-

what too suddenly in the *en avant deux*, he did not acquit himself in a fashion far inferior to the achievements of his immortal type. Mr. Snodgrass danced in a more sentimental and languid manner, and occasionally turned up his eyes to heaven as some divine poetic inspiration passed through his imagination; and his partner, who doubtless laboured under the most pitiable and deplorable misunderstanding, declined to venture upon another quadrille with her melancholy companion, believing most firmly that he was either intoxicated or insane—but rather inclining towards the former supposition.

The dancing was kept up with great spirit (as the newspapers say in their reports of a fashionable ball) till about eight o'clock, at which hour Mr. Pickwick, who feared the effects of the night-air after the violent exercise he had taken, proposed to return home. But before he and his companions took their leave of the kind-hearted peasants, he left a liberal sum in the hands of the game-keeper to supply the village swains and their fair partners with as much wine and other refreshments as they might require. In reward for this liberality, Mr. Tupman ravished a kiss from the lips of his ruddy partner; and Mr. Samuel Weller declares that he should not have ventured to have done the same by his charmer, had he not been bound to follow the good example set him by his masters—a statement which leads us to imagine that Mr. Pickwick also concluded the evening's recreation in a similar manner.

"We must walk to Belleville," said Mr. Kallaway, "and there we shall probably find a couple of vehicles to carry us home."

But scarcely had the party gained the outskirts of the wood, when a black cloud, which within the previous half-hour had assumed a most threatening aspect, sent forth a deluge of rain.

"Run—run!" shouted Mr. Winkle; and the party took to their heels accordingly: the distance was however still great between them and Belleville; and no immediate refuge was nigh.

Wet and miserable they at length arrived at Belleville, and entered a café where a good fire and a bowl of excellent punch speedily put them all into a good humour. As soon as Mr. Weller had dried his clothes, and consoled himself with a tumbler of the reeking liquid, he sallied forth in search of a hackney-coach or two; but as he remained away upwards of three quarters of an hour, and the night was setting rapidly in, Mr. Pickwick grew gradually more and more uneasy, till at length nothing would please him but he himself must sally forth in search of his tardy domestic. It was in vain that Mr. Kallaway and Mr. Walker offered to undertake that task; Mr. Pickwick had partaken freely of wine and punch, and was resolved; and his friends knew that he would be obeyed.

Another half-hour passed away. At length a hackney-coach drew up to the door; and Mr. Weller emanated from the interior thereof, to the great delight of those who were waiting for him.

"Where's the governor?" inquired Mr. Winkle, who did not perceive his venerable friend in the coach.

"Vy, I left him vith you," answered Mr. Weller. "I couldn't get no coach afore, cos o' the vet. But vhere is the guv'ner? It's

raythe too good to ask me, as the thief observed ven they inquired if he wos guilty or not guilty."

"He went to look after you," returned Mr. Winkle. "How very provoking this is!"

So it was indeed, especially as the hackney-coachman began to be impatient. Mr. Kallaway accordingly stept forward to pacify him, and desired him to wait a short time, as they were expecting a friend.

"A friend!" cried the driver; "he will not come now! It is raining in torrents."

"Oh! yes, he will," returned Mr. Kallaway, who spoke French like a native: "he is not gone far."

"What sort of a person is he?" inquired the coachman, who was anxious to proceed as speedily as possible, the state of the weather promising more fares than one.

"A short stout gentleman, with gaiters and spectacles," said Mr. Kallaway.

"And a hat?" exclaimed the coachman, knowing that he could not be very far wrong in hazarding this question.

"Exactly!" cried Mr. Kallaway. "Do you know what has become of him?"

"I saw him get into a *coucou* half an hour ago," said the driver, condescending to an untruth for the purpose of urging our heroes to depart.

This piece of information was duly communicated to Mr. Kallaway's companions; and the whole party did not hesitate any longer to proceed forthwith to Paris. They accordingly crowded themselves as well as they could into the vehicle—Mr. Weller was obliged to ascend the dickey—and the coach rolled away from the café at a tolerably rapid rate.

In the meantime Mr. Pickwick had wandered about in the rain, seeking his servant or a hackney-coach, and not very much caring which he should discover first. But his search after both was totally useless; and he was compelled to return to the café, still more wet and miserable than before. What was his vexation to find that his friends had gone without him? Not even Sam had staid to take care of him! The mystery was inexplicable,—so was the road home! Mr. Pickwick did what every other rational man would do in a similar situation, and that was to question the waiter of the café as to the *where* and *how* his friends had departed. The answer was so far satisfactory, that Mr. Pickwick understood, after a great deal of trouble, that his friends had left in a yellow coach, but more than that the deponent could not answer for.

The weather cleared up a little, and Mr. Pickwick resolved upon walking on the road to Paris until he should overtake, or be overtaken by, some public conveyance. But he arrived at the Barrier without succeeding in either of his designs or wishes. A vehicle was stopping at the Barrier just as our venerable traveller reached the gate;—it was a yellow vehicle; and he immediately concluded with his usual sagacity, that it could be no other than the one in which his friends had sought refuge. The coach moved on—Mr. Pickwick ran after it—the driver whipped the horses—Mr. Pickwick called aloud

to him to stop—and he, seeing an ancient gentleman covered with mud and dirt, in pursuit of his equipage, pulled up at the corner of the next street.

"*Voila mes amis!*" cried Mr. Pickwick: and the coachman, fancying that the ancient gentleman had recognised some of his friends, leapt from the box, opened the door, hoisted Mr. Pickwick into the vehicle with all imaginable alacrity, and was preparing to ascend to his dickey once more, when a strange occurrence prevented him.

Mr. Pickwick had been thrust into the coach before he had time to *reconnoitre* its inmates; and as it was tolerably dark, the inmates themselves could not very well examine his countenance.

"Heavens! it is my husband!" cried a female voice in French.

"The devil it is!" cried a male one in the same language; and in less than ten seconds, the lady had opened the door on the farther side of the vehicle and leapt into the road, followed by her companion.

Mr. Pickwick was thus left in quiet possession of the coach; but the driver, who did not understand these singular proceedings, and who was afraid of being cheated out of his fare, proceeded to inform Mr. Pickwick that he had been hired for the whole day, and that he should expect him (Mr. Pickwick) to pay the amount of twenty-five francs, as he had taken upon himself the task of frightening away the legitimate lessees of the vehicle. This arrangement was acceded to by Mr. Pickwick; and having signified his address to the coachman, he threw himself back in the carriage, and enjoyed an uninterrupted nap till he arrived safe and sound at the door of his place of residence, where he found Mr. Weller and his friends in a state of the greatest anxiety on his account.

Mutual explanations then ensued; and the whole party laughed heartily at the trick which the first coachman had evidently played in stating that he saw Mr. Pickwick jump into a *couccu*. Nor less was their mirth excited by the narrative of the discomfiture experienced by the lady and her lover in the coach which had so fortunately restored the great man to his friends.

CAAPTER LVIII.

MR. MUGGINS GIVES A GRAND BALL, TO CELEBRATE AN ANTICIPATED EVENT WHICH PROMISES TO MAKE A CONSIDERABLE CHANGE IN HIS FAMILY, AND IN THE FORTUNES OF A CERTAIN EMINENT INDIVIDUAL.—THE ADVENTURES OF THE EVENING.

All was bustle and noise at the house of Mr. Muggins in Upper Stamford Street, Blackfriars, London. An unusual glare of lustre shone from the windows of the first floor, and from the gas light over the front door; and all kinds of vehicles (waggons—carts—hearses, and wheelbarrows excepted) lined the street for upwards of twenty yards, right and left of the house.

But why was the abode of Mr. Muggins in Upper Stamford Street, a scene of bustle and noise? Why were the vehicles assembled at the door? Why had the fat cook a clean cap on in the kitchen, and Mrs. Muggins a sky-blue turban up-stairs? Why had jellies, whips, creams, custards, *blanc-manger*, and a variety of other delicacies been fabricated in the morning at the dwelling of Mr. Peter Muggins? Why were the inquisitive people of the house opposite stationed at their windows to gaze at the individuals that stopped at Mr. Muggins' door? And why had the Major, who resided on the first floor, been persuaded to allow the family to use it upon this occasion? These questions can all be answered in six words, of which four are monosyllables,—*Mr. Muggins gave a grand ball!*

And why did Mr. Muggins give a grand ball? Because Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham was about to lead to the hymeneal altar Aramintha, eldest daughter of Peter Muggins, Esq.

Many years ago it was the custom for the guests to arrive at about four o'clock: then some fashionable innovator changed the important moment till six. In the time of George the Second, dancing commenced at seven; and this state of things continued for some time without interruption. But at length a duke or a duchess issued cards for eight, and then another fashionable person changed the hour into nine. The truth is, that unless the gentlemen have a sufficient time allowed them to drink a couple of bottles of wine or so each, after dinner, they cannot be expected to make themselves as agreeable as they do when they join the ladies or go to a ball or evening-party. Every winter the hour of arrival gets later and later; and we understand that it is the intention of certain fashionables at the West End, when, in the course of the next season, they receive cards for a ball or *soirée*, not to go till the following morning.

Now Mrs. Muggins had issued her cards "for eight precisely;" and, therefore, at eight precisely there was not a soul present. At half-past eight, a few old ladies, widows, and young gentlemen of fifty, made their appearance; and at nine, the rooms began to fill.

"Well, here you are at last," said Mr. Muggins to the Captain, whose knock at the front-door he had recognised, and whom he had hastened to meet in the passage. "What news in the city to-day?"

"Oh! all as right as the mail," replied Captain Walsingham, as he hung a magnificent cloak upon a peg in the hall, and then hung himself upon Mr. Muggins' arm. "Fourteen more shares were disposed of."

"So much the better," said Mr. Muggins. "But just excuse me one moment;" and Mr. Muggins led his future son-in-law into the back ground-floor room, where Mary was arranging the supper.

"I see you mean to do the thing in a slap-up style," observed Captain Walsingham, as his eye glanced over the preparations we have before slightly alluded to.

"Oh! on these occasions, you know—it looks well," whispered Mr. Muggins: then, addressing himself aloud to his domestic, he cried,

"Mary, I am very uneasy about them two tarts Mrs. M. declares she made three dozen and four."

"Lauk-a-daisy, Sir," ejaculated Mary, "who would a-think o' counting tarts on the night of a party? I'm sure if they was all gone, I shouldn't ha' knowed wot had becomed on 'em."

"It's very strange," persisted Mr. Muggins, "very strange, particularly as that cold veal-pie that was left the day before yesterday at our dinner, has never been accounted for."

"Weal-pie! wot weal-pie?" demanded the indignant servant. "For my part, I hates weal-pie like pison: it always gives me a hindigestion."

"Well, well—Mary," said Mr. Muggins, "we won't say no more about it at present.—Now, Walsingham, let us walk up-stairs."

And Mr. Muggins led the way to the drawing-room, where the Captain found his intended in close conversation with a small group of eight or nine cousins who had just arrived from the country.

"Here's Horatio!" said Miss Aramintha to her relatives, in a whisper loud enough to be heard all over the room; and the interesting object of her devotion glanced towards his dancing-shoes, and then at the ceiling, in order to encourage a belief that his ear had not caught the remark.

"What a fine young man!" observed one of the cousins to Miss Aramintha Muggins.

The Captain advanced towards the group, paid his respects in a peculiarly refreshing and off-hand manner to his intended, and was then introduced in due course to the Misses Stodge; to one of whom he shortly remarked that it had been a very fine day, and to another that he was afraid it would be a wet evening. All this was exceedingly charming; and as a conversation was thus began, a great deal of laughing and giggling soon commenced in the corner where the Captain and the group of young ladies were stationed.

At a little distance from this happy party, sate a very stout old lady with a very thin daughter, and a gentleman with a wig, whose back was turned towards Captain Walsingham, stood talking to them. But the tone of this gentleman's voice seemed far from unfamiliar to him; and two or three observations made by the said gentleman produced a somewhat extraordinary effect upon the gallant Captain. He started — gazed uneasily around — and for a moment appeared thoughtful and embarrassed.

"It was in Paris, ma'am, that this took place," said the gentleman with the wig to the lady with the daughter, in allusion to some adventure he had just been relating: "I was staying at Lawson's—no, I wasn't—what a terrible falsehood I was going to tell you—'twas at Meurice's, I meant—in the Rue Saint Honoré. No—no—in the Rue de Rivoli, it was—what nonsense I *am* talking!"

"Paris is a very beautiful place, I believe," observed the fat old lady.

"Lor, ma, of course it is," returned the thin daughter in a tone of reproof, as much as to say that no lady, who pretended to be a lady, ought to be ignorant of such a notorious fact.

"Paris *is* a splendid place," said the gentleman. "I recollect

when I was at Brussels—no, it wasn't—it was at Vienna—I mean, the East Indies—it was very hot indeed. By the bye, did I say just now that I had been in China?"

"I think you intimated as much," answered the old lady.

"Well, then—if I did," cried the gentleman, very properly suggesting *errata* in reference to his own discourse every two minutes, "I told you a confounded story."

This was quite enough for Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham. He jumped up from his chair, pleaded a sudden indisposition as an excuse for his rudeness, and disappeared from the drawing-room as quickly as two good legs and a pair of dancing-pumps could carry him. But as he was descending the stairs three at a time, he ran forcibly against Mr. Muggins, whose nose was severely damaged by the violence of the concussion, and whose equilibrium was almost totally overthrown.

"Where are you running to?" demanded Mr. Muggins, rubbing his nose.

"Home—anywhere—I am dangerously ill—dying—all but dead," cried the Captain.

"Stay a moment," exclaimed Mr. Muggins, "you can retire to my own bed-room and lie down a little."

"Impossible!" returned Captain Walsingham.

"I can't suffer you to go away in this state," said Mr. Muggins: "you might faint in the street. Besides, you don't look so very bad after all."

"Oh! I'm better now," ejaculated the Captain; and he made a desperate effort to pass Mr. Muggins on the stairs; but that gentleman held him by his coat-tails, and begged him to return to the drawing-room.

"I *must* introduce you to a certain person there," said Mr. Muggins; "he's quite an original, I can assure you. You'll be vastly amused with him, I know!"

"Who the devil is he!" demanded the Captain, impatiently.

"Oh! a gentleman that I've known a long—long time," returned Mr. Muggins: "his name is Boozie."

"Boozie!" ejaculated the Captain; and the name seemed to give him fresh force to tear himself away.

"Walsingham," cried Mr. Muggins, "this is very strange conduct on your part: I see you're no more ill than I'm ill—but I suppose that some other gal besides my daughter has attractions for you."

Captain Walsingham hesitated—this firmness on the part of Mr. Muggins alarmed him. He could not afford to lose the fair hand of Miss Aramintha; and there were certain very pressing reasons which rendered it inconvenient for him to return to the drawing-room. He deliberated within himself for one moment what course to pursue; and the result of his reflections was that he declared himself to be much better, and professed his willingness to accompany Mr Muggins to the drawing-room once more. But as he turned to ascend the stairs, his foot purposely slipped, and he fell with his head against one of the steps. Mr. Muggins hastened to his assistance—the Captain applied his hands to his right eye, as if to ease

the pain the blow had occasioned—and Mr. Muggins led him down to the front parlour on the ground-floor. Mary was speedily summoned to his assistance; and a piece of brown paper steeped in vinegar was forthwith applied to the Captain's right optic. A neat white cambric handkerchief was then tied round his head; and by way of precaution, the Captain drew it as far over his face as he possibly could. Mr. Muggins then applied his nose to the bottle, which Mary had brought to assure himself that it was vinegar and not brandy; and having desired that excellent female not to eat any of the sweets in the next apartment, he hastened with his wounded guest back to the drawing-room, where all kinds of sympathy were immediately offered to the gallant Captain. Indeed to such an extent was he the object of universal commiseration, that Miss Aramintha Muggins enquired of her mother whether it would not be decent and becoming for her to faint: but the prudent parent thought that one scene was quite enough at a time; and so the idea was immediately renounced, and tears substituted instead of a fit.

The quadrilles now commenced; and "glanced the many twinkling feet" of the Misses Stodge and the Misses Muggins, together with those of several other Misses, in the mazy dance. The young gentlemen whispered tender things in the ears of the young ladies; and the young ladies simpered, and looked tender things at the young gentlemen. Some young gentlemen walked the figures with the utmost ease and indifference of manner in the world; and others cut as many capers as if they had just emerged from a dancing-academy. Those young ladies who had pretty feet and ancles, took advantage of the opportunity offered to make others aware of the fact which they themselves well knew; and those, whose legs were any thing but aristocratic, were careful to ruffle their long petticoats as little as possible. What an expressive picture of human failings, weaknesses, and passions, is the ball-room! It would seem as if every thought, every sentiment, were agitated and revealed, by the mere motion of the dance. And then the little whispering—the harmless scandal—the temporary intimacy, so soon to relapse into coldness and distance—which accompany the quadrille!—Of the harmless scandal, take the following as a specimen.

"How well Miss Aramintha looks this evening," observed a young lady to her partner.

"Well, do you think so now?" returned the young gentleman thus addressed. "For my part, I never *did* admire her."

"Oh! as to admiration, that is another thing," said the young lady: "I meant *well for her*."

"She is always laughing," observed the young gentleman, determined to prefer his partner to any one else in the room.

"She knows she has good teeth," said the young lady. "But what do you think of the eldest Miss Stodge?"

"So exceedingly vulgar!" was the answer.

"She comes from the country, you must remember."

"Ah! that's it: I knew there must be something. People who come out of the country, always *are* vulgar."

And while this young gentleman and this young lady were thus

diverting themselves at the expense of Miss Aramintha Muggins and her cousin, Miss Aramintha herself was not less agreeably occupied with Captain Walsingham.

"I'm sure I don't know where pa could have picked up that gawky young man opposite," said Miss Aramintha.

"I don't like to say a word, you know," returned Captain Walsingham, "but I really do *not* think the company is so very select:" and his eye (for one was temporarily useless) wandered towards the place where Mr. Boozie was sitting.

"I asked ma not to invite the Gaddingtons," continued Miss Aramintha; "but she *will* have her own way. And then there's old Mrs. Chilmers, who takes snuff: I can't bear that old woman; she is *so* scandalous—she never has a good word for anybody. The Gogars ain't amiss—only they *do* dress so! As for the two Miss Niddrys, I detest the sight of them; though *they* ain't so bad as the Tippings."

Having thus mentioned the names of nearly all the families or individuals in the room, Miss Aramintha kindly observed that "if it weren't for them, the company would be agreeable enough," and Captain Walsingham perfectly coincided in all that his intended advanced. Such was a portion of the occupation of those present at Mr. Muggin's ball; and, with a change of names, the same sketch will apply to any ball that ever yet was given, from the *réunion* at Almack's to the "hop" at a country fair.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said Mr. Boozie, stepping up to Captain Walsingham during an interval between the dances; "but have I not had the pleasure of seeing you before?"

"Never, Sir—never," replied the Captain.

"Weren't you ever at Naples—no Paris, I mean?" demanded Mr. Boozie, inflicting a good stare upon the gentleman thus addressed.

"Oh! yes," answered Captain Walsingham; "some years ago, when I was attached to Lord Kummitstrong, the Ambassador."

"You don't happen to have a relation of the name of Crashem?" continued Mr. Boozie.

"Crashem!" said the Captain, appearing to reflect: "Crashem—what an old man, with white hair, do you mean?"

"No—a person just like you," exclaimed Mr. Boozie, casting another scrutinizing glance upon the Captain's countenance.

"Oh! then I don't know him," replied that gentleman.

"How strikingly like him you are!" said Mr. Boozie.

"Indeed!" cried Captain Walsingham; then, after a moment's pause, he added, "Have you been long in England?"

"Oh! yes—eighteen months—no, what a falsehood I was telling!" returned Mr. Boozie: "I should think it is more than two years since I left Paris."

"Have you known Muggins long?" demanded Captain Walsingham, in a most mysterious manner.

"Not very long," was the answer.

"Ah! then you don't know anything about him?" continued Captain Walsingham, with a sly laugh.

"Nothing particular," said Mr. Boozie.

"Does he owe you any money?" was the next question.

"No!" was the next answer, delivered in a tone of astonishment.

"Oh! your turn ain't come yet, then," said Captain Walsingham, in a more mysterious manner still.

"What do you allude to?" asked Mr. Boozie.

The Captain made a sign to Mr. Boozie to follow him into the passage, where the conversation was continued.

"What do I allude to?" repeated the Captain: "now—can I trust you?"

"If you mean, can I keep a secret," rejoined Mr. Boozie, "I answer 'Yes.' When I was in Paris—New York, I mean—four years ago—"

"Never mind that," said the Captain impatiently. "You don't want to lend money, and never have it back again, I suppose? Well—you must take care of Muggins, then: I'm in for it deep enough already: a couple of cool thousands—nothing more, as my friend the great—I mean, as people say."

Mr. Boozie appeared alarmed.

"And a deuced lucky thing it will be for you if he don't call you out of the room presently, and ask you for a loan," added Captain Walsingham.

Mr. Boozie looked aghast.

"Devilish awkward fellow to have to deal with," continued the Captain: "borrows money, and if you won't lend him any, sends his tall brother to call you out."

Mr. Boozie glanced anxiously around him.

"And whenever he means to fix a victim," said Captain Walsingham, by way of winding up his speech, "he invariably invites him to a party."

"I am exceedingly sorry—that is, very much obliged for this hint," said Mr. Boozie. "I live at Camden-town—no, I don't—what a devil of a cracker I was going to tell! I *did* live there—now I'm residing at Camberwell—here's my card—no, it isn't—but there it is—and I shall be most happy to see you, if ever you come my way."

With these words Mr. Boozie wrung Captain Walsingham's hand to express his gratitude, and took himself away from the house as quickly as he could, without taking leave of any body.

"Where the devil's Boozie?" cried Mr. Muggins, running out of the drawing-room, and meeting the Captain on the stairs.

"I really can't say," was the immediate reply.

"Oh! Aramintha said he left the room with you," returned Mr. Muggins.

"We certainly had a few minutes' conversation together," rejoined Captain Walsingham: "but I lost sight of him at least five minutes ago."

"Well—I dare say we shall find him presently," exclaimed Mr. Muggins. "I'm going to ask Mary about them glasses o' negus. There's only eighteen on the tray, and Mrs. M. put twenty."

"How very provoking!" ejaculated the Captain.

"O' course it is!" continued Mr. Muggins. "But I tell you what I did."

"What!" said the Captain.

"Why, I counted the whips, the jellies, and the custards, just now; and I shall go and count them over again."

"Ah! ah! you're a man of the world, I see;" cried Captain Walsingham. "When I was ambassador to the Great Cham's court, I had plenty of opportunities of amassing money; but some how or another, I never kept it. I had a native for a butler—his name was Rumtutch—and he was a devil of an extravagant fellow. He would'nt eat his beef-steak cooked between the saddle and the horse's back· he must needs have a fire, the rascal! Still he wasn't so bad as my head valet, Orl Me Igh, who never could sit down to dinner without a boiled child."

"A boiled child!" exclaimed Mr. Muggins.

"Or roast," added Captain Walsingham: "the Tartars prefer it to sucking pig."

"Ah! see what it is to have travelled!" said Mr. Muggins, shaking his head, and surveying the Captain with the greatest respect.

"See indeed!" cried the Captain. "Why—what do you think could have made me what I am, if I hadn't travelled? There's nothing like travelling to enlarge the mind."

And the Captain might have added the "imagination also;" but Mr. Muggins did not notice the deficiency; and so, while the latter proceeded to count the tarts and jellies, the former hastened to rejoin Miss Aramintha, not a little pleased with his success in having so easily got rid of Mr. Boozie, and now wishing the bandage round his head at the devil.

When Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham returned to the drawing-room, Miss Aramintha Muggins was going to accompany herself on a piano that was out of tune, and was just commencing a song, which she had suffered herself to be persuaded to sing, after having refused some eight or ten dozen times. Of course her lover hastened to turn the leaves of the music-book for his intended; and the whole business passed off uncommonly well, if we except an error committed by Captain Walsingham, which led him to turn over two leaves at a time on one occasion, probably with a view of obliging the company, from whom he certainly received the secret thanks he so much deserved. He, however, made every due apology, which, after a little necessary pouting, was accepted: but, as we have thus faithfully narrated the circumstances attending the mere mechanical process of singing the song, we may as well favour the readers with the song itself.

SONG.

WAKEN, Beauty, from thy slumber,
Shake that drowsy sleep away;
Hours are passing without number,
And the sun proclaims the day.

Waken, maiden, from thy pillow—
Longer must not be thy rest:
Yet why like the stormy billow
Rises so thy snowy breast?
Hark, Oh! hark! the loud reveil
O'er the turret-walls is ringing;
Morning's dawn these numbers tell,
And the birds are blythely singing!

On your jetty lashes flashing
Salt tears gush out from thine eyes;
Gloomy as the torrent dashing
Are those deep heart-rending sighs.
Is it love thy bosom tearing,
With'ring all thy joys away—
Love desponding—love despairing?—
Love will still maintain his sway!
Love then deadens the reveil,
Though aloud 'tis early ringing;
Morning's dawn those numbers tell,
While the birds are blythely singing!

Slumber on, thou lovely maiden;
For if sorrow rend thy breast—
If thy heart with grief be laden,
Then indeed that sleep is rest!
Slumber still, on passion dreaming—
Slumber on, though not with sighs—
Slumber on, though tears be streaming,
Like the spray, from thy dark eyes!
For I'll hush the loud reveil,
O'er the castle turrets ringing;
Nor shall it arise to tell
When the birds are blythely singing!

It was thus, that, by the aid of a great deal of dancing, plenty of chattering, and a little singing, the time passed quickly away; and as the clock of Christ's church struck one, and the old watchman proclaimed the same in the street, a whisper was industriously circulated that supper was ready. As Mr. Muggins's rooms were not very large, the rumour soon spread all over them; and the company hastened to the apartments below, where they found a magnificent display of all kinds of luxuries, *minus* a few small articles which Mr. Muggins had missed, and which Mary had prudently put aside for herself.

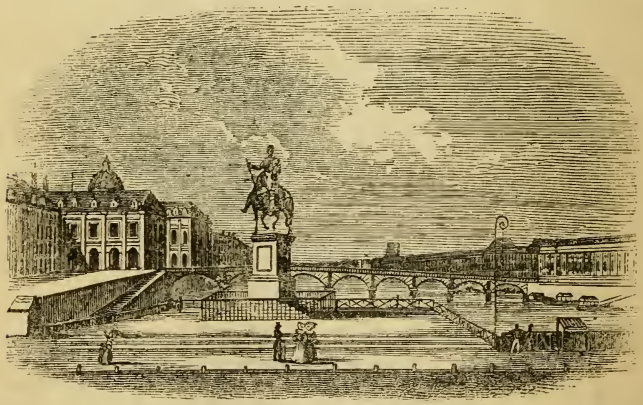
It only remains for us to observe that after supper the dancing was continued with renewed spirit, and kept up till a late hour—that Mr. Muggins gave a great many toasts relative to the success of the Universal Stone-Expelling and Asphalte-Substituting Equitable Company—that Captain Walsingham was felicitated by all the gentlemen present upon his approaching marriage with Miss Aramintha Muggins—and that the harmony of the evening was only interrupted by the discordant piano, then by Captain Walsingham's fall, and, lastly, by the fact of Mr. Muggins discovering his domestic, Mary,

excessively drunk upon the rug before the kitchen-fire, when he summoned her to assist the ladies to their shawls, cloaks, and bonnets, previous to their departure.

CHAPTER LIX.

MR. PICKWICK IS INTRODUCED TO ANOTHER EMINENT TRAVELLER.—THE WAY TO CONCOCT A BOOK OF TRAVELS.—MR. WEGSWORTH MUFFLEY'S ANCESTORS.—THE CIRCASSIAN LADIES.

Mr. Pickwick stood in Paris, on the Pont Neuf! Beside him was Mr. Tupman,—behind him was Mr. Weller,—before him was a view of the river and the palaces that adorn its banks,—beneath him was the pavement of the bridge,—and above his head was the blue and cloudless sky. Mr. Pickwick, accompanied by Mr. Tupman, and attended by Mr. Weller, was taking an afternoon-walk; and the



beauty of the western prospect which meets the eyes of the passenger over the Pont Neuf, had induced him to stay his steps for a few moments to enjoy the magnificence of the scene.

And in truth it is a splendid view! On the right hand, the eye surveys the two finest *façades* of the Louvre, and the long wing of the Tuileries which looks upon the river. Farther on are perceived the terrace and the trees of the gardens themselves; and as the glance follows the right bank of the river, the Champs-Elysées, the buildings of Passy, and the heights overlooking Auteuil, form a scene of grandeur and beauty which cannot be very readily conceived by those who trust to description only for an acquaintance with Paris. On the left hand are seen the vast edifices of the Mint, the College of Four Nations, the unfinished abode for the Minister of the Interior, the splendid barracks erected by Napoleon, the Chamber of Deputies, and the garden in front of the hotel occupied by the President of

that legislative body. The numerous bridges, stretching across the river between the spacious quays—the large bathing establishments, that float upon the waters themselves—and the statue of Henry the Fourth, standing upon a lofty terrace jutting out into the middle of the river from one extremity of the Island of the City—complete the hasty sketch which we have given of this interesting prospect.

"Charming view," said Mr. Pickwick, when he had feasted his eyes to his heart's content.

"Beautiful," observed Mr. Tupman, who was ogling a girl in one of the little shops upon the bridge.

"Vich vay now, Sir?" enquired Mr. Weller, touching his hat.

"Let us take a stroll towards Notre Dâme," said Mr. Pickwick; and in the direction proposed did they proceed accordingly.

"Wery great thoroughfare, this here, Sir," observed Sam, in allusion to the Pont Neuf.

"Very," coincided Mr. Tupman.

"Lot's o' vimen a-sellin' o' fried fish there in the open air, Sir," continued Mr. Weller. "The French seems to think o' nothin' else but eatin', drinkin', and dancin'. You see a feller vith a lemonade or liquorice-root-vater consarn on his back, at every corner. The po-lice don't overturn the fruit-stalls here as they does in London. Blowed if I don't think von is more freer here than in England, Sir."

"I am rather inclined to be of your opinion, too, Sam," said Mr. Tupman. "But here's Chitty, and another gentleman—a stranger, too, with a black patch over his left eye."

"*Bonus post meridiem*—good afternoon, gentlemen," cried the poet. "Allow me the pleasure of introducing my friend, Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, the great traveller. He's just come to Paris to take notes for a new book."

These last words were delivered in a whisper; and Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman bowed politely to Mr. Muffley, whose exceedingly capacious person and large round grinning face formed a striking contrast with the lean exterior of Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"Great food for contemplation in this vast city, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick to the traveller.

"Very great, Sir," returned Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, staring with his one eye into the window of a cook's-shop opposite which they were standing, on the Quai des Orfevres. "Rather different in this respect from London."

"And yet you never become sated with that which is afforded by Paris," remarked Mr. Pickwick.

"True enough!" exclaimed Mr. Muffley: "a bowl of turtle-soup goes twice as far as a bason of Julienne—that's the difference between Birch's and Very's."

Mr. Pickwick bestowed a stare of that kind of astonishment which would have been denominated *stupid* in connexion with any one save our immortal hero; and Mr. Wegsworth Muffley took a pinch of snuff.

"Have you been long in Paris, Sir?" "enquired Mr. Tupman.

"Only three days—and I leave to-morrow," was the reply.

"Of course you have been here before?" continued Mr. Tupman.

Mr. Muffley answered in the negative.

"You will be obliged then to return again, in order to complete your book," said Mr. Tupman.

"Oh! no," cried Mr. Wegsworth Muffley: "I should be sorry indeed if I couldn't see enough in three days to make the finest two-volumed work imaginable. I staid to breakfast, for twenty minutes at Abbeville, and intend to devote two chapters to that city. Versailles and Saint Germain I shall not have time to visit; but Chitty has given me a few hints about those place; and then, you know, with the aid of a book of Paris Views, illustrated with letter-press, we can concoct an excellent description of the principal buildings."

"I thought it was a much more difficult thing to write a book of travels," observed Mr. Tupman, meekly.

"*Super lævum*—over the left," cried Mr. Chitty.

"The grand secret is to be as spiteful and malevolent against the city or country you write about, as possible," explained Mr. Muffly, "and then your book is sure to sell. Flatter the vanity of the English by depreciating foreign institutions, and crying up their own, and you will be certain to succeed. Tell the real truth, and no one will recommend your work. But if you will just step into this café, I can show you some of the very important notes I have already made upon France and the French."

When the little party were seated at a table in the Café to which Mr. Wegsworth Muffley pointed, that gentleman produced his memorandum-book, and read the following curious facts and observations.

NOTES FROM THE PRIVATE MEMORANDA OF WEGSWORTH MUFFLEY, ESQ.

Boulogne.—Saw two little boys in the streets playing at marbles: thence surmised that all French boys are of a lively and happy disposition. Met a young lady with red hair: the inference is that the French ladies in general have red hair. Saw a donkey throw its rider off its back into the gutter: supposed that all French donkeys are more stubborn and obstinate than those of any other part of the world. Observed that a tailor, who was carrying home a suit of clothes to a customer, was hump-backed: must remember to notice in my book, as a curious coincidence, that nine tailors out of ten are hump-backed in this country. Was accidentally knocked down by a porter: it will be a good observation to make that French politeness is all nonsense.

Abbeville.—Excellent breakfast at the hotel where the diligence stopped: the inference is, that all the hotels are good at Abbeville. Saw a furious bullock running through the streets: Abbeville is thinly populated, then, in consequence of the influx of mad bulls into the city. While we were at breakfast, a gentleman committed suicide by throwing himself out of a three-pair window: thence concluded, that the people in this part of France are peculiarly

addicted to ending their days by precipitating themselves from the "Tarpeian rocks" of three-pair windows.

Beauvais.—The ——th regiment of light infantry is stationed in this town. Met one of the soldiers; he was excessively ugly: inferred, as a remarkable coincidence to be mentioned under the head of "Army," that all French soldiers are ugly. Might even go farther, and state that all continental soldiers are ugly. The observation will sell a few copies amongst the English officers, and get the work favourably spoken of at the mess of English regiments. Happy idea, this! Two old women got into the diligence at Beauvais: *mem.*—extraordinary fact, that Beauvais abounds in old women who undertake frequent journeys to Paris.

Saint Denis.—Saw a mad-dog, without a tail: the dogs of Saint Denis are, perhaps, prone to insanity, and when affected by that malady, lose their tails.

Paris.—Shall place my *memoranda*, made in Paris, under their proper heads; as follows:—

FINE ARTS.

Pictures here are very cheap. You can purchase plenty at one or two *sous* each on the different quays. Nine out of ten are portraits of Napoleon: one represents him upon a white horse, another on a sort of blueish one, and a third upon his legs. The French prosecute the fine arts with great diligence. In newspaper advertisements, an announcement of a coach or a house for sale, is prefaced by a vignette of a coach or a house; wine-merchants adopt a small picture of a person drinking in a cellar; &c. &c. The ladies not only have their portraits painted, but paint their own faces also. The crowds, that collect round the picture-shops, are peculiarly favourable to pick-pockets, thieves, &c.

SCULPTURE.

Effigies of Napoleon abound in Paris. You may purchase a Murat for twelve *sous*, a Jerome Bonaparte for fifteen, an Emperor of Russia for twenty, and a Great Mogul for twenty-five. Kings are amazingly cheap amongst the sculptors; whence I infer, that all French sculptors are republicans.

MUSIC.

People, who play barrel-organs in the streets, must be licensed by the Prefect of Police. Dancing bears are generally attended by big drums and fifes. Charlatans frequently employ tambourins and fiddles to attract a crowd round their tables in the streets leading out of the Boulevards. Monkeys not unfrequently accompany the tunes of the barrel-organs, in cheerful dances: indeed, the monkeys in Paris appear particularly fond of dancing.

PUBLIC EDIFICES.

The public edifices of Paris are numerous and beautiful—especially the hotels, eating-houses, and coffee-rooms. The prison for debtors is in the Rue de Clichy: it is a comfortable and salubrious place, finely

situated in one of the most agreeable quarters of Paris, enjoys the advantage of a select neighbourhood, and is greatly frequented by the English.

POLITICS.

It is so very unsafe to discuss this subject in Paris, that I failed to obtain any accurate account of the political situation of the French.

MANNERS.

These are peculiar. A beggar, when he meets a gentleman engaged in the same profession, takes off his hat, and makes a low bow. An individual, who sweeps a crossing near the Madeleine, ran against an old woman who was selling matches the other day. "A thousand pardons, *Madame!*" exclaimed the street-sweeper. "Don't mention it, *Monsieur*," was the match-woman's reply.

LITERATURE.

I candidly confess that I am not sufficiently acquainted with the language, to read French books; but I know that they are infamous. Their most celebrated men are one Voltaire, who wrote a *Philosophical Dictionary*—Corneille, a play-wright—and Paul de Kock, a novelist. They have also a ballad-composer, named Bérènger. But Voltaire's performance is not to be compared with Grose's *Slang Dictionary*—Corneille is not equal to Sniggers, who writes for the penny theatre in the New Cut—and Bérènger's songs are greatly excelled by that famous collection of English ballads popularly known as *the hundred songs for a penny*.

"There, what do you think of that?" cried Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, as he brought his *memoranda* to a conclusion. "I should hope there's enough for two good thick volumes *there!*"

"Don't you think you might have said a little more on some of those subjects?" asked Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! I shall swell the work out, you know," returned Mr. Muffley. "In the commencement, you will recollect, that I noted the various points of interest which occurred to me; and then I most impartially put down my own inferences. Well—from each of these inferences, I shall draw ten more, and so on. Capital plan, isn't it?"

"What a sensation it will create in the minds of the English, this new work—*novum opus*—of your's!" ejaculated Mr. Chitty: "there will be the devil to pay—*diabolum solvere!*"

"I went down to Greenwich last summer, and staid there for a week or ten days," said Mr. Wegsworth Muffley; "and that trip put a hundred pounds in my pocket."

"How was that?" asked Mr. Tupman.

"Why—I wrote my *Impressions of a Voyage to Greenwich, and Residence in that Town*," was the answer. "But my crack

work was *Doings in Dover*, with an appendix containing *Hints upon Hythe, and Reminiscences of Rye.*"

"You seem to delight in alliterations, Sir," remarked Mr. Pickwick, with a smile of satisfaction at the word he had used.

"I don't, Sir," returned Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, in a most mysterious tone; "but the publishers do. That is why I called my first novel *Pranks in Pentonville*, and my second *Incidents at Islington.*"

"Dinner time's approachin', Sir," said Mr. Weller in a whisper to his master; "an' if so be your appetite ain't qvite ass-vaged vith the gammon o' that there feller, perhaps you'd like for to try another kind o' bacon at home. Change is good for the health, Sir, as the judge said ven he recommended transportation to the young gen'leman vich wrote the wrong name on a bill-stamp."

"Perhaps, Mr. ——," began Mr. Pickwick,—

"Wegsworth Muffley," said Mr. Chitty.

"Mr. Wegsworth Muffley will honour us with his company, added Mr. Pickwick. "We have spoilt your walk this afternoon; but our way home lies along the quays, and——"

"Say no more, my dear Sir," interrupted the illustrious author; "I and my friend Chitty will accept your kind invitation with pleasure. It will not interfere with my visit to the ladies in the evening."

"We must have dined somewhere—*aliquid ubi*," observed Mr. Septimus Chitty; "and can as well dine with you: indeed it will suit me much better."

Mr. Weller muttered a remark, about his not doubting the truth of Mr. Chitty's assertion; and the four gentlemen, attended by that faithful valet, strolled leisurely towards the Rue Royale, where they found Mr. Winkle, Mr. Snodgrass, and the dinner, all three ready to receive them.

"I should think you must find travelling very agreeable," said Mr. Snodgrass to Mr. Muffley, whose remaining optic sparkled with the exhilirating influence of the champagne.

"Oh! nothing is more pleasant, I can assure you," returned Mr Muffley, "and yet I am the first traveller in our family. My father was a very brave man—"

"Was he, indeed?" cried Mr. Snodgrass.

"Oh! very," continued Mr. Wegsworth Muffley: "he had two horses drop down under him on one occasion."

"Where—in battle?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"No—in the riding-school," replied Mr. Muffley. "But that was nothing to my great-grandfather by my mother's side."

"He must ha' been a wery great man, he must," observed Mr. Weller: "a out-an'-outer, an' no mistake, I dessay."

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Sir?" cried Mr. Weller.

"You may do as little boys are desired to do," rejoined his master.

"Wot's that, Sir? come in at dessert?" said Sam.

"No," answered his master: "hear, see, and say nothing."

"As I was observing," continued Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, "my

great grandfather was a very brave man also. He had upwards of two hundred and odd scars upon his body."

"Where did he get them?" asked Mr. Snodgrass: "in battle, I suppose. Only fancy two hundred and odd scars! and all caused by a sword or bayonet!"

"No they weren't," said Mr. Muffley.

"By what then?" demanded Mr. Tupman.

"By leeches," answered Mr. Muffley. "But all our family were noted for their bravery. I myself carry about with me the proofs of my valour."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickwick, who probably did not see them.

"Yes—my visage bears testimony to my gallantry," continued Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, pointing to the black patch over his right eye, a movement which Mr. Winkle surveyed with the greatest respect.

"*Venit fortis*—he comes it strong," whispered Mr. Chitty to Mr. Pickwick: "but he's a splendid fellow, I can assure you."

"I lost this eye in a very peculiar way," said Mr. Muffley.

"Your antagonist was a German, was he not?" demanded Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"He was," replied Mr. Muffley.

"A duel, I presume, Sir?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"A contest in a certain way," explained Mr. Wegsworth Muffley. "The fact is, we made a bet as to who could eat the most. I won the wager; and in the height of his anger, the German seized a hard egg, and threw it at me with such force, that he knocked my right eye clean out of its socket. I was in such a fury, that if I had not been held back I should have fallen under the table."

"G— bless me!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick.

"But I had my revenge," proceeded Mr. Muffley: "for I killed him in the course of a few days."

"*Thatt* was in a duel, I suppose," observed Mr. Winkle.

"No, it wasn't," cried Mr. Wegsworth Muffley. "We had another eating match—and the German died of an indigestion."

"Which scarcely compensated you for the loss of your right eye, I should imagine," remarked Mr. Pickwick.

"I assure you, I have not suffered amongst the ladies on that account," answered Mr. Muffley: "and, between ourselves, I rather think that this very black patch of mine will produce some wonderful effects soon. In fact, I don't know if it has not already secured me the affections of a most amiable and intelligent girl, who, with her mother, travelled in the same coach from London in which I had taken my place."

"Is she an English lady?" enquired Mr. Tupman.

"She speaks English," answered Mr. Muffley: "but she is a Circassian by birth. Her mother is one of the widows of the Emir Frostiphace Fo-gho, who was killed in an encounter with the Russians."

"And is she very beautiful?" asked Mr. Tupman.

Mr. Muffley replied in the affirmative.

"Is she fond of poetry?" asked Mr. Snodgrass.

"Very," said Mr. Muffley. "But if you be not otherwise engaged, I shall feel most happy in presenting you all to this charming creature. Her mother gave me a most pressing invitation to call this evening, and desired me to bring any English acquaintances with me that I chose. She loves the English, but detests the French most cordially."

"How singular!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick. "I really feel very curious to see these Circassian ladies. I don't think I ever saw a Circassian in my life."

"Oh! I once saw a battle between the Circassians and the Russians," cried Mr. Muffley.

"Where—in Circassia itself?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"No—at Astley's," returned the traveller.

"And so you were rather smitten with this young lady—*percussus fuisti*," remarked Mr. Chitty.

"Oh! more than smitten," cried Mr. Muffley: "my heart is henceforth devoted to her alone. She is, besides, immensely rich in her own country; and of course I did not make myself out a regular pauper. In fact, I had an opportunity of obliging her."

"You will marry her, then?" muttered Mr. Tupman, with a very audible sigh.

"I shall make her an offer, most decidedly," was the answer. "They fortunately return to England to-morrow also."

"And you think you will be accepted?" said Mr. Chitty.

"I feel certain of it," ejaculated the traveller. "And why do you think I feel certain?"

"Because she said you might hope, I suppose," observed Mr. Tupman, with another sigh.

"No—but because she let me kiss her."

"That was a practical fashion of encouraging hope," remarked Mr. Pickwick, smacking his lips; but whether to relish the champagne, or for any other reason, we are at a loss to determine.

"If we intend to visit the Circassians this evening," continued Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, "we had better start at once."

"You do not think we shall be deemed intrusive?" asked Mr. Pickwick.

"Quite the contrary," said the traveller. "They have put up at the Hotel du Rhin, in the Place Vendome: to tell you the truth—I lodge there also myself, and I persuaded them to patronize the same hotel; or else they were going to stay with the President of the Chamber of Peers. But, as their abode is so very near, we can walk thither in ten minutes."

The truth of this suggestion was immediately recognised by the gentlemen to whom it was addressed: and they all forthwith proceeded to the Place Vendome.

"What are the names of the Circassian ladies?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, as Mr. Muffley led the way up a wide staircase in the Hotel du Rhin.

"Upon my word I do not know," was the reply. "They wished to preserve the most strict *incognito* in Paris, and so I advised them to adopt my name for the moment. The fact is, I was desirous of

establishing myself in their confidence, by assuming the part of a protector."

"You behaved very judiciously," observed Mr. Pickwick.

Mr. Muffley led the way into a handsome apartment, where two ladies, dressed in the most fashionable French style, and wearing anything but an Asiatic appearance, were lounging on velvet ottomans. The moment the gentlemen entered the room, and when Mr. Muffley announced himself and his friends in his most insinuating tone, the two ladies rose to receive them with a series of enchanting smiles. But the younger one suddenly started—uttered a loud scream—and precipitated herself over her mother in such a way that they both fell upon the sofas.

"The Countess Loveminski!" ejaculated Mr. Snodgrass.

"Madame de l'Amour!" cried Mr. Winkle.

"Anastasie de Volage!" shouted Mr. Tupman.

"The Circassian Emir's daughter!" exclaimed Mr. Muffley.

"*Qualis eo*—what a go!" said Mr. Chitty, astonished at the behaviour of the Pickwickians.

"These ladies are already known to some of us, Mr. Muffley," said Mr. Tupman: "and their acquaintance is so very valuable, we will not deprive you of the pleasure of its full enjoyment by an attempt to share it."

"Bravo, Tupman!" cried Mr. Winkle. "But it would be a sin not to tell our fellow-countryman that he is the dupe of the most arrant swindler that ever was."

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, turning very pale.

"That your ladies are as much Circassians as we are," answered M. Winkle, indignantly.

"Come, my friends," said Mr. Pickwick: "we have no longer any business here, now that the exposure has taken place."

"And I, who am answerable for their hotel bill, and who lent them a thousand francs into the bargain, because they had only notes of the Bank of Circassia," cried Mr. Muffley, with a very long face.

"My dear Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, "you had better put up with the loss as quietly as you can, if you do not wish to be laughed at by all the English in Paris."

"At any rate, I will inform the master of the hotel of the character of his guests," exclaimed Mr. Muffley; and while Mademoiselle Anastasie and her mother were weeping in each other's arms, the gentlemen retired from the apartment.

CHAPTER LX.

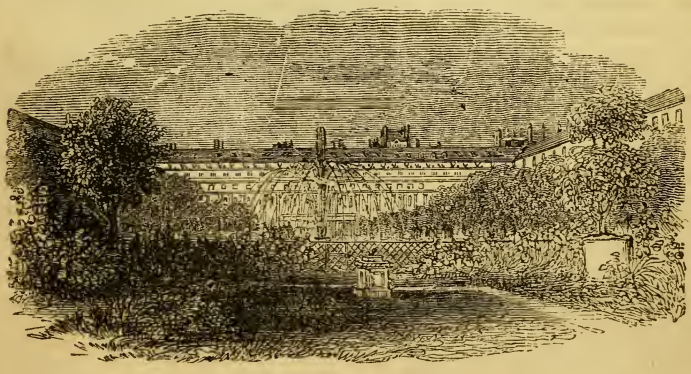
MR. SAMUEL WELLER ENCOUNTERS SEVERAL FRIENDS.—A CONVERSATION AT THE ENGLISH CHOP-HOUSE IN THE PLACE DES ITALIENS.

"SAM," said Mr. Pickwick one morning to his faithful valet, "it is my intention to devote the whole of this day to put my papers and memorandum-book in order. My three friends and myself are then going to dine with Mr. Scuttle, in the evening, and so you may have a holiday, Sam."

"Wery good, Sir," returned Mr. Weller; "nothin' like rewardin' merit, as the gen'leman observed ven he told his son he might keep the bad four-penny piece for his trouble in havin' changed the sufferin'."

Mr. Weller tossed his hat upon his head, suffered it to remain over his left eye where it fell, and sallied forth to amuse himself. He walked down the Rue Royale with his hands in his waistcoat pockets, and with a prim-rose in his mouth; turned into the Rue St. Honoré, and as he strolled leisurely along it, towards the Palais Royal, with all the ease and independence of a Lazzaroni, he mingled the rich volume of his loud whistle with the busy hum of the great city: in other words, he executed the much-esteemed air of the *Dogs-meat Man*, with such variations as his knowledge of those popular songs, *The Return of the Admiral, Barclay and Perkins's Drayman*, or *God Save the King*, was calculated to suggest.

Sam proceeded in this very elegant manner to indulge himself with a walk in the garden of the Palais Royal. The shrubs and plants



were clad in their most verdant attire—the sun beamed gaily and brightly upon the waters of the fountain—the orange-trees were already

laden with their inviting fruits, and the south-west breeze, that agitated the foliage, was refreshing and cool. A number of healthy and buxom nurses were seated upon the chairs beneath the trees, and around them were playing their little charges—a group from which might haply spring a future Soult, or another Madame de Stael. It was as yet early, and but few ladies and gentlemen were to be seen in the gardens.

Mr. Weller took two or three turns up and down the gravel-walk, and round the reservoir, and was just coming to the very erudite conclusion, that as it was a warm day, a drop of French beer would not be amiss, when he was overtaken by Messieurs Knackers and Porrett, prize-fighters and citizens of Great Britain.

"How air you, gen'lemen?" said Sam, bestowing a patronizing nod upon his select acquaintances.

"Why, pretty tidy, thank'ee, Sam," was the reply: "how are you?"

"Vy," answered that gentleman, "I ain't in a gallopin' consumption, an' I doesn't think I shall live a hundred year. I eats a good breakfast—ditto dinner—and ditto supper: them's the symptoms o' the state o' my health."

"We're a-walking off the effects of last night's punch," observed Mr. Knackers.

"Drinkin' too much is wery bad for the nerves, gen'lemen," said Mr. Weller. "There wos vonce a beggar o' my ackvaintance as vent to be enrolled in a Temperance Society. 'Wery glad you've made up your mind to this at last, Mr. Boucher,' says the Secretary vith a vinning smile.—'Vy,' says my friend, 'as I can't get no tick for gin, I may as vell make a merit o'necessity.'—'Wery true,' says the Secretary; 'an' I'm conwinced you'll feel much better for it in a day or two. Ardent spirits eats avay the coats o' the stomach.'—'Vell, I'm exceedin' glad to hear as how my stomach has got a coat to it, Sir,' says the beggar, 'cos I'm blowed if my back has.'"

"Devilish good, that," exclaimed Mr. Porrett. "But we should'nt have come it so very strong last night, if some one had'nt stood Moses—a deuced good fellow he was too; wasn't he, Knackers?"

"Capital!" cried the gentleman thus appealed to. "He is an out-an'-out Englishman—a man who can stand his four pots of intermediate beer without blushing, afore dinner, and his half of a crown bowl arterwards. He only come to Paris last night.

"I forgot to ask his name," said Mr. Porrett; "and that was wrong on our part, 'cause he's a noble fellow. He's come to see a near relation o' his, he told us; but as it was very late last night, he didn't choose to disturb the family where his relation lived; so he sat up till half-past two with us—didn't he, Knackers?"

"To be sure he did," returned Mr. Knackers. "But I'm afraid he's precious green in this country; and if he don't take care, he'll get fleeced of every thing he possesses before he can look round him."

"So wery green, is he?" said Sam.

"Very," said Mr. Knackers.

"Cabbages and peas is nothin' to him, I 'spose," continued Mr. Weller.

"Nothing," returned Mr. Knackers. "He's come over with his

tops and cords, and his broad-brimmed tile; just for all the world like a coachman: and, my eye, what a red face!"

"Vhere is this phernomenon?" demanded Sam, beginning to be somewhat interested in the description of the generous stranger.

"We left him at breakfast at Wood's," answered Mr. Porrett. "He said he should just lay in a couple of pound of cold beef or so, and imbibe a bottle of English stout, in order to fortify his feelings to endure the meeting with the relation he's come over to see."

"Vell, this is raythor singular," said Sam, after a moment's consideration; "an' yet I don't think as how it can be the old un. There is a many stout gen'lemen in the vorld besides my father."

"Curiosity is very soon satisfied in this respect," observed Mr. Porrett. "Come along with us, and we'll introduce you to the private gen'leman in question."

"Agreed, as Doctor Faustus said, ven he sold his-self to the devil," cried Sam; and the three gentlemen bent their steps up the Rue Richelieu, towards the Place des Italiens, accordingly.

Arrived at Wood's chop-house, Mr. Porrett peeped through the circular window in the door, and instantly informed Mr. Weller in a whisper, that the stranger was still there.

"And what's more remarkable still," added Mr. Porrett, "he's just emptying his third bottle of stout."

"Time to put a stop to that 'ere," said Sam; and pushing the door wide open, he walked very coolly into the tavern, and confronted no less a person than his excellent father, who was seated at one of the tables.

"Vy, Samivel, is that you?" exclaimed Mr. Weller, senior, opening his eyes, and raising his hands in astonishment: "how wos it that you com'd for to find me out? But I sees how it wos; an' instead o' takin' you by sapprize, you drops down on me like a four-year old."

"Wot a old curiosity, it is," cried Sam, grasping his father's hand, and seating himself at the table opposite to him: "the National Gallery o' pickters ain't nothin' to you. Wot brought you over here?"

"Vy, I'll tell you how it wos, Samivel," said Mr. Weller, senior, jerking his head to the right, and winking his left eye in a peculiarly easy and graceful manner; "I had such a wery good customer for the brandy and rum as I laid in at my public-house on Shooter's Hill, that I wery soon got quit o' them articles. So I had in another supply o' rum, and thinkin' that o-de-we is much better in this country than on t'other side o' the vater—"

"Then I 'spose you made a tolerably good thing by that there excellent customer o' your'n?" interrupted Sam.

"No, I didn't though," returned his father, dogmatically

"Vy not, old un?" demanded Sam.

"Cos that same good customer as I wos a speakin' about, was the wery worst as ever come into my house," said Mr. Weller, senior, striking the table very forcibly with his fist, and thereby raising a cloud of dust, which he instantly washed from his throat with the remnant of the third bottle of stout.

"That there's a paradox," observed Mr. Knackers.

"It may be a pair o' ducks, or a pair o' fowls, Sir," said Mr. Tony Weller, looking sternly upon the prize-fighter; "but it's as true as

you're a standin' there a starin' at me, as if I was a learned pig, or a intelligent monkey, or some sich consarn."

"How?" cried Sam.

"Cos that there customer wos a wery good feller to patronize the liquors, Sammy; but a deuced bad von to pay."

"Vhy did you trust him, then?"

"He took it all on credit, Sam," was the reply; "and I couldn't find it in my heart to per-went him. In fact, this wery rum customer wos my own wery blessed an' interestin' self."

"Brayvo, old dot-an'-go-von," cried Sam: "an' so I 'spose that wot vith drinkin' and smokin' all day long, there wosn't much profits to inwest in the three per cent. counsels."

"More shame for me, Samivel—more shame for me!" said the old gentleman, shaking his head solemnly. "Instead o' leavin' you at my death, a couple or three thousand pound, you von't inherit from me, if I goes on in the same vay, nothin' else than a wery bad example."

"Vich I ain't obleeged to foller," added Sam, very coolly.

"Howsomever," continued Mr. Weller, senior, "I made a resylootion to give up drinkin' in futur. Here, Villam—you may jist give me a little drop o' your o-de-we to sink all this stout, or else I shall bust my veskitt afore long, an' it vould be a wery sad thing, Sammy, to see your old father drop down a inanimate corpse on the floor."

"So that's the vay you keeps vise resylootions, is it?" said Mr. Weller, junior; "three bottles o' stout, an' a go o' brandy neat, ain't a bad commencement. If you're in the habits o' takin' that 'ere afore dinner, I should like to know wot you takes arterwards."

"Vy, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, senior, "I used to take a glass o' hot an' strong grog arter dinner, cos the medickle men says that cold drinks is wery unwholesome ven poured on hot food: then that made me wery dry, and so I took a glass o' cold vithout, vich inwariably give me a stomach-ache, an' obleeged me to drink a drop neat, vich made me wery dry again; so that wot vith the cold vithout, the neat, an' the hot an' strong, I generally managed to take in a tolerable quantity o' liqvid afore I vent to bed."

"I only wonder you didn't ewaporate vith woluntary combustion," said Sam, surveying his father with a look of mingled good-humour and pity.

"Woluntary wot?" said Mr. Weller, senior, disdainfully.

"Woluntary combustion."

"Wot's that?" demanded the old gentleman, dealing a glance of 'ndignation upon his son.

"Blowin' up like gun-powder ven you goes for to snuff the candle out vith your fingers," explained Sam.

"Oh! that's woluntary 'bustion, is it?" said Mr. Weller, the elder. "No—no, Samivel; I wos too much accustomed to blowin' up in your mother-in-law's time to fear it now. Gun-powder isn't more formidabler than a o'oman's tongue. But as I wos a-sayin' jist now, ven you, Sammy, wery imperlitely interrupted my dis-course, I thought I'd take a run over and buy my own o-de-we in the reg'lar markitt. By doin' that I killed two birds vith von stone—"

"Vhere's t'other bird?" said Sam.

"You," returned Mr. Weller, senior. "Don't you think I wos wery

anxious to see my own flesh and blood, Samivel, arter a long seppiration? How's the guv'ner?"

"Conwalescent," said Sam. "But vy didn't you write a line to say you wos a-comin?"

"So I did, Sammy."

"I never got it, then."

"I knows you didn't, Sammy," said the elder Mr. Weller, "cos I kept the he-pistle in my veskitt-pocket."

"Ven did you cut your visdom-teeth, crikey?" exclaimed Sam, in a contemptuous tone. "Vy, I'm blowed if you ain't vorse than the American doctor as give his patient the fee and swallowed the medicine his-self."

"Wot did he do that for?" demanded Mr. Weller, senior.

"In wot Mr. Cuttle calls a fit o' absence o' mind," answered Sam; "an' he never found out his mistake till his patient got vell, and he his-self wos taken wery ill."

"That there observation o' your'n, Samivel, puts me in mind o' the surgeon as pulled his boy up afore the beak, an' accused him o' stealin' the bottles instead o' deliverin' the medicine at the proper houses. 'Pray how did you detect the youngster, old feller?' says the magistrate.—'Please your vorship,' says the doctor, 'I found all my patients a-gettin' vell, an' I thought it wos so exceedin' odd that a wague suspicion (a wery wague von at fust) entered my mind. I watched the young maylefactor there, and diskivered the whole trick. If he'd only gone on in the same vay a little longer, I shouldn't ha' had a patient left. They'd all ha' got well.'—That's my anny-goat, Sammy."

"We must show you something of Paris life, Sir," said Mr. Knackers, taking advantage of a pause in the conversation; and with a view of taking a similar advantage of Mr. Weller's innocence concerning the French capital.

"Wery much obleeged for your per-lite offer, Sir; as the king said ven O'Connel offered him a go o' whiskey; but I'd rayther de-cline it," exclaimed Mr. Weller, senior. "I've got my own son here, an' a wery dutiful an' dewout little boy he is—ain't you, Sammy?"

"The wery hemblem o' filial dewotion, old feller," replied Sam, bestowing a familiar wink upon his venerated parent. "I wos rayther too vell brought up not to foller a good example; as the mule vich had associated all its life vith its father, as wos a stubborn donkey, observed to its mas'er."

"A wery excellent remark is that there o' your'n, Samivel," said Mr. Weller, senior, approvingly; "an' I don't mind if I treats you and them two wery amiable gen'lemen, as wos desirous o' showin' me about Paris, to a bottle o' the best wine the place can perduce.—Villam."

"Sir," said the waiter.

"Two bottles o' your best Port di-rectly, Villam," said Mr. Tony Weller, regardless of the kicks under the table, and the winks above the table, which were profusely bestowed upon him by his very dutiful son.

"How come you to find out this here place?" asked Sam, whom a glass or two of a wine he had not tasted for a long time, at length succeeded in restoring to good humour.

"There's a old coachman—a friend o' mine, "said Mr. Weller, sen.

"as took a coach on the Dover road. Ve embarked in the same wery hon'rable perfession together five-and-twenty year ago, come next Janivary;—rollockin' young blades we wos in them times—"

The mere reminiscence of his early days recalled so many pleasing associations to the memory of Mr. Tony Weller, that he burst out into an immoderate fit of laughter, and did not cease till he was quite purple in the face.

"That's right, old stick-in-the-mud," exclaimed Sam; "vind-pipes is cheap now-a-days, since strangilation seems to be no more feared than a hot tatur by a vild Irishman."

"Never mind, Sammy," said the old gentleman: "ven you come to my age, only you carry yourself as vell as I does, an' then you may talk. But wot wos I a-sayin'? Vy—that this here old friend o' mine had been in Paris—'twas during the cholera, vich he kept under vith French brandy—an' he stopped at Voods's here his-self—"

"Ah, so *he* recommended the hot-tel," said Sam, shrewdly suspecting that his revered father was somewhat inclined to wander in his discourse. "Vell, I've heerd o' more improbable things than that 'ere."

"Wery true, Sammy," rejoined old Mr. Weller, chuckling; "it ud ha' been much more vonderfuller if that red-nosed man as used to wisit the late Mrs. We, had left off drinkin'. But wot d'ye think become o' that there Stiggins, Samivel?"

"Can't say," was the respectful answer of Mr. Weller, junior.

"I see him a-sittin' in the stocks at Chatham, von day, Sammy," continued Mr. Weller, senior, "for havin' tried to conwert the daughter o' the o'oman vere he lodged. I didn't pitch a rotten egg at him, Sam—Oh! no—not by no means wotsomever;" and as he spoke, he shook his head, jerked his right thumb over his left shoulder, and bestowed a hieroglyphic alphabet of winks upon Messieurs Knackers and Porrett, who seemed somewhat at a loss to comprehend the meaning of that animate and living telegraph.

"Wot a old spectacle it is!" cried Sam. "Vere's the use o' conwertin' yourself into a punch or image in a galliwanty show, jist for the sake o' amusin' others?"

"An' then that there feller to fancy he wos von o' the leg-at-ease," continued old Mr. Weller, again alluding to the red-nosed man.

"Legatees, Sir," remonstrated Mr. Knackers.

"Leg-at-ease, Sir," cried the old gentleman, indignantly. "Sammy and I has been leg-at-ease, Sir; an' it would be a wery odd thin' if so be ve didn't know our own titles."

"Certainly, certainly," said Mr. Porrett, who probably had his own private reasons for not wishing to dispute with an individual whose disposition to pay was so manifest.

"Vell, vell," ejaculated Mr. Weller, senior, "ve von't dispute about a trifle. The wery best o' friends is raythor inclined to fall out now an' then. Hosses gets restive, starts, bolts, backs agin a vall or into a ditch, an' overturns the coach; but the wehicle's soon lifted up again. So it is vith friendship, isn't it, Samivel?"

"Don't sit there a-gammonin' avay at that rate, old un," returned Mr. Samuel Weller. "The two bottles is all done for now; an' as the guv'nor has give me a holiday—"

"No!" cried the old gentleman, his countenance expanding with delight, "has he raly, though?"

"True as you're there," answered Sam.

"Let's make the best on it, then, Sammy," exclaimed his father, rising, and preparing to pay the bill. "I've heerd talk o' the Pally Royal, the Tooleries, the Bullwardes, an' the coffee-houses; an' I shouldn't be at all sorry to make a more formiliar ackvaintance vith 'em. P'rhaps these gen'lemen 'll jine us in a little ramble."

"With pleasure," ejaculated Messieurs Knackers and Porrett.

"Come along, then," said Sam; and the four gentlemen sallied forth upon their projected excursion.

While his faithful valet was thus employed, Mr. Pickwick devoted an hour or two to the arrangement of his papers. But the task soon became a wearisome one;—the re-perusal of our letters is seldom attended with any other feeling than one of irksomeness. He accordingly referred from time to time to the tale-books which lay upon the table near him; and at length totally abandoned his *memoranda*, in order to apply himself entirely to the narrative which principally engrossed his attention in the aforesaid volumes. We here present the tale, with which Mr. Pickwick wiled away the time on this occasion, to the reader.

CHAPTER LXI.

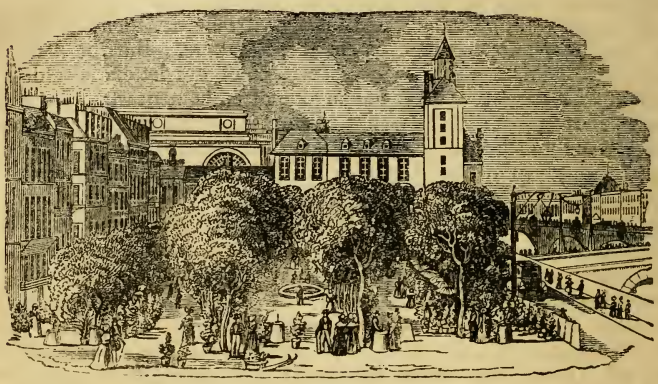
THE FAIR STRANGER.—A TALE.

Part I.

THE FLOWER MARKET.—THE NOTARY.—THE HOUSE AT AUTEUIL.—THE STRANGER IN THE CLOAK.—FREDERICK FOLLOWS THE CARRIAGE.

It was early one fine morning, in the month of June, 1810, that a young lady, attended by an old female domestic, was seen inspecting and purchasing the choicest productions of Parisian horticulturists at the Flower Market on the Quai Dessaix. She was about nineteen years of age; and although the expression of her eyes and the smile of her lips betokened the most immaculate purity of soul, still the very beauty of her form, which somewhat inclined to *embonpoint*, had endowed her with a little of that *nonchalance*—that voluptuous *desinvolture* which the French so well know how to appreciate. Her step was stately though modest; for the grandeur of Nature and the bashfulness of a virgin mind, struggled every where about that lovely being—in her eyes, her bosom, her gestures, her symmetry, and her gait. Her forehead was broad and open, and it wore that sublime pallor, that chaste whiteness, which may be denominated a poetic diadem that grief, or love, or innocence sometimes bestow upon their elect. Her eyes were large and dark, and her hair was light: but her brows were also dark, and these contrasts only served to set forth the beauty of her complexion to a greater advantage. Her attire was modest, but composed of good materials. She seemed to be a lady, who, on account of a certain right to that title, required not the auxiliary charms of dress to support her pretensions. In a word, there was a

charm—a species of mystery—an innocent voluptuousness—and a fascinating power about this young person, which produced an immediate and spell-like impression upon the mind of a youth, scarcely one year her senior, who followed her, both with steps and glances, as she walked round the beautiful market, which, for the richness and rarity of its flowers, probably possesses no rival in the world.



"I am but a poor lieutenant in the army," said the young man to himself, as he gazed upon the features of the bewitching stranger; "but were I Napoleon Bonaparte, I would surrender half the glories of my crown to possess so lovely a being."

And as he uttered these words, he drew as near as delicacy would permit him to the young lady; and while she was inspecting the flowers of one of the stalls, he examined her countenance with ill-concealed rapture and interest.

"I must indulge in an unwonted extravagance this morning, Rosalie," said the young lady to her servant; "these flowers are the choicest I have ever yet seen, and you know how passionately fond I am of those delicious gifts of Nature."

"You are your own mistress to make what purchases you choose, *Mademoiselle*," returned the domestic; "and I am sure that were you to buy the entire market, Monsieur de Ruysan would not reproach you."

"My excellent guardian, on the contrary, is delighted to see me happy," said the young lady. "But let us not stand idling here: I have made my selections, and we must return home."

"Now, Frederick Grandet," said the young man, apostrophising himself, "your curiosity is gratified in two points; you are aware that the fair stranger is *Mademoiselle*, and that her guardian's name is De Ruysan."

And in order to satisfy himself in another respect, he followed the young lady and her servant at a little distance, to discover their abode. They took the shortest cuts towards the Rue Vivienne, and turned

into a house, on the ground-floor of which dwelt M. de Ruysan, Public Notary—facts of which Frederick Grandet was made aware by the brass plate upon the door communicating with the offices of the man of business.

On the following morning, at the same hour, the young lieutenant hastened to the Flower Market, and looked anxiously around to discover the beautiful object of his search. But she was not there. Day after day did he repair to the spot where he had seen her—and day after day was he doomed to be disappointed. At length his health was impaired—his appetite failed him—he neglected his duties, disobeyed his commanding officers, and became totally altered both in appearance and behaviour. The reader need scarcely be informed that the charms of the young lady had made a deep impression upon the mind of Frederick, and that he burned to become acquainted with the beautiful creature whom he had only seen once, and on that occasion but for a few minutes.

At length he thought of finding a pretext for calling upon the notary, who appeared to be the guardian of the young lady. Love is a most able tutor to improve the inventive faculties of man; and if the possession of some fair girl were the invariable aim and object of our studies, there would certainly be less ignorant people in the world. Frederick Grandet accordingly set his imagination to work; and having persuaded himself that a little country-house in the neighbourhood of Auteuil, of which M. de Ruysan was advertised in the newspaper to be the landlord, and which was to let, would exactly suit him, he hastened to the notary's residence in the Rue Vivienne.

M. de Ruysan, was a venerable old man of sixty-eight, with a sharp black eye, the fire and vivacity of which had not been impaired by the advance of age. His hair was white as snow—his countenance was expressive of candour and frankness—and his manners resembled those of the polished gentleman of the *regime* of the Bourbons. He requested Grandet to be seated, and replied to the enquiries of the young man with affability and kindness.

"You have a house to let at Auteuil," said Frederick.

The old gentleman bowed an affirmative.

"And from the particulars mentioned in the advertisement," continued Frederick, "it appears likely to suit me."

"The rent is fifteen hundred francs a year," said the Notary.

"Nearly the whole of my pay," thought the impassioned lieutenant within himself.

"It will be ready for a new tenant in the course of a week," added M. de Ruysan: "at present my family resides there."

"Could I call and see it?" enquired Frederick eagerly.

"No, Sir—not now," answered the Notary immediately. "But if you be urged by motives of particular haste, I shall be happy to accompany you thither in a day or two. My wife and a young lady are there at the present moment—and particular circumstances compel me to abstain from disturbing them."

"In that case I will call in two days," said Frederick; and he retired from the office.

His first impulse was to hasten to Auteuil, and endeavour to catch a glimpse of the lady who was staying with Madame de Ruysan, and

whom he suspected to be the object of his passion. The house was situate in the prettiest part of the beautiful village of Auteuil, near the entrance to the Bois de Boulogne; and by the aid of a little information derived from some of the inhabitants of Auteuil, Frederick succeeded in discovering it. He was in love,—and now that he imagined himself to be in the neighbourhood of her whose beauty had captivated his heart, the time passed away with leaden steps no longer. For five long hours did he wander about the house, without obtaining the means of gratifying his ardent curiosity—and those five hours seemed to him to be but as many minutes. He watched every window, counted every tree in the garden, paced the length of the palisades in front of the enclosure, and committed the locality of every shrub and plant to memory, before he uttered a syllable, or made a motion expressive of impatience. At length the shades of evening gradually enveloped all surrounding objects in gloom; and then for the first time he recollected that he ought to have mounted guard that morning. He had been guilty of a breach of military duty which subjected him to be cashiered!

His reverie of love was rudely interrupted by this sudden reminiscence; and he was about to tear himself from the spot, when the garden-gate creaked upon its hinges, and he hastened towards it to catch a glimpse of the person who was about to issue thence. A short individual, wrapped up in a military cloak, met the eyes of Frederick Grandet; and this personage was followed at a little distance by another, disguised in a similar manner. Frederick's heart sank within him,—the idea of a rival immediately possessed his imagination.

"You have been loitering about the house for these last five or six hours," said the shorter stranger, advancing towards Grandet, and addressing him in an authoritative tone of voice, without apology or preface,—"and I demand to know wherefore?"

The stranger folded his arms across his breast, beneath his cloak, and awaited Frederick's answer with coolness and patience. He could not, however, discover the workings of the young man's countenance, for it was by this time quite dark.

"When I am informed of your right to question me," began Frederick, "I shall—"

"Frivolous subterfuge!" interrupted the stranger, sternly. "You lurk about this neighbourhood during the better portion of the day, and having a right to argue that your intentions are any thing but honest, I should be justified in delivering you over to the next police-station."

There was something in the tone and in the manner of the stranger which repressed the insolence of the reply Grandet was about to make him; and the young man quailed, he knew not why, as he endeavoured to mutter an excuse. But the stranger appeared to read his inmost thoughts.

"Attempt not to deceive me," cried he, again impatiently interrupting our young hero. "You have been watching this house in order to catch a glimpse of one of its inmates?"

"I have," returned Frederick, boldly; for something told him that the truth would avail him more than evasion in this matter.

"And you have seen her already somewhere, then?"

"Once only," was the answer.

"Do you know her name, her rank, her family—or any thing of ner, in fine?" proceeded the stranger.

"Nothing, I can assure you," replied the young man. "But be persuaded that in answering your queries, I am merely anxious to exculpate myself from any derogatory suspicions connected with my occupation in watching this house to-day."

"Who are you?" demanded the stranger, after a pause, during which he had appeared to reflect upon Frederick's last observation.

"Nay," returned the young man; "I do not feel myself compelled to ——"

"Who are you?" interrupted the stranger, heedless of all apology or remonstrance, and putting the interrogation in a tone which seemed to command an answer: "speak!"

"Frederick Grandet," was the almost involuntary reply.

"What are you?"

"A lieutenant in the —— Hussars."

"You ought to have been on guard to-day at the Colyseum," observed the stranger, after another short pause: then, without waiting for an admission of the truth of the remark, he added, "Return to your quarters this moment, young man—if you value your future welfare."

The stranger uttered this injunction in an impressive tone, and passed rapidly on his road towards the metropolis, accompanied by the individual who appeared to attend upon him, and who had not uttered a word during the whole of the above conference.

Frederick mounted his horse, and rode slowly back to Paris. He returned to his quarters with fear and trembling, for he expected the announcement of his arrest to be made to him as he entered the barracks. But he passed unnoticed to his own apartments, and early on the following morning, received a communication from the colonel, ordering him to enter upon the duty which he had neglected the day previously. This leniency on the part of his superiors astonished even more than it delighted him; and he gladly repaired to the post where he was to remain for the ensuing four-and-twenty hours, every moment of which was devoted to meditating upon her who was already dearer to him than rank, fortune, fame, and even life!

But, alas! the loves of the denizens of this world are but too often passports to disappointment and distress. No sooner was the young officer released from his duty on the ensuing morning, than he received those tidings, which would have overwhelmed him with delight a few days previously, but which now plunged him into the deepest distress. He was promoted to the rank of captain in another regiment, the *depôt* of which he was ordered to join at Toulouse without an instant's delay. He hastened to the hotel of the Minister of War, and implored a furlough of only three days. The answer to his request was a peremptory refusal; and he was commanded to leave Paris the same evening.

For a moment he thought of resigning his commission and devoting himself entirely to the object which engrossed all his energies and ideas: but he remembered that he was entirely dependent upon his profession for

the means of existence, and that to renounce his employment would be to place an insuperable bar between the fair stranger and himself.

Such were his reflections as he hastened to the office of M. de Ruysan. The old gentleman received him with a distant and reserved politeness, which was strangely contrasted with the frankness and urbanity of his manners on the occasion of his former visit.

"I have called in reference to the house at Auteuil," said the young officer.

"I am no longer disposed to let it," returned the Notary, in a tone of firmness and decision, which testified the strength of his resolution.

"Your mind has changed very suddenly," said Grandet.

"Very," rejoined the Notary, laconically.

"Your family, I suppose, will continue to occupy it?" said Frederick, after a moment's hesitation.

"Possibly," said M. de Ruysan; and he rose from his chair to intimate that the conference was at an end.

Frederick was determined to essay a desperate manœuvre in order to obtain, before he left Paris, some tidings of the mysterious lady, his love for whom already appeared to exercise a latent influence over his destinies; but the subject was a difficult one to touch upon.

"I presume Madame de Ruysan and the young lady, who occupy the house, are not inclined to leave so delightful a spot," said Frederick; "or probably the latter is compelled by the state of her health—"

"Those are not my motives, Sir," interrupted the Notary, sharply: "it is sufficient that my house is no longer to be disposed of in the way you had proposed."

M. de Ruysan conducted the young captain to the door of the office, and bowed him into the street. At the same moment a handsome carriage stopped opposite the great gate-way.

"'Tis she!" exclaimed Frederick audibly; and a gleam of joy illminated his countenance, as he saw the fair stranger alight from the carriage, followed by an elderly lady, whom he concluded to be Madame de Ruysan.

The Notary, whose countenance changed when he observed that Frederick lingered to catch a glimpse of the angelic features of his beautiful ward, hastened to conduct her into his apartments; but from a few hurried words which passed between them, Grandet discovered the Christian name of his adored one to be Clementine. He also perceived that the warmth of the old Notary's attachment to the interesting girl was materially repressed by a sentiment of respect and deference.

There was a Café opposite the house in which the apartments and offices of M. de Ruysan were situate; and thither did Frederick repair with the determination of watching the motions of his beloved till the moment of his departure for Toulouse, which was fixed for nine o'clock in the evening.

Hour after hour passed away, and Clementine did not make her appearance.

"I shall yet be doomed to disappointment," cried Frederick, clenching his fists, and grinding his teeth with rage: but scarcely were

the words uttered, when the same carriage he had seen in the morning drove up to the door of the house opposite. It was about half-past seven o'clock, and he had only a short time left to remain in Paris.

A few minutes elapsed, and at length Madame de Ruysan and the beautiful Clementine issued from the house, and stepped into the carriage. They were attired in the most elegant manner, and were evidently dressed for a ball or *soirée*. Clementine's symmetrical and voluptuous form was set off to advantage by the garb she wore; her long hair fell over her shoulders, and a few straggling curls lingered on her glowing bosom, which was indeed of dazzling whiteness. A tiara of diamonds adorned her brow; and the majesty of her deportment seemed to be the characteristic of a queen. The very rustling of her garments as she stepped into the carriage, created a thousand indescribable sensations in the breast of the observer.

Frederick determined to follow the vehicle, and ascertain its destination. He accordingly stepped into a cabriolet which was passing along the street at the moment, and ordered the driver to pursue the same direction as that taken by the carriage.

The vehicle, in which sate the lovely but mysterious object of Frederick's fondest affections, passed down the Rue Vivienne, turned to the right, rolled along the Rue Richelieu, crossed the Rue St. Honoré, and proceeded to the Court of the Tuileries by the nearest cut to the Rue de Rivoli.

"Am I to follow it, Sir?" demanded the driver of the cabriolet.

"No," returned Grandet, in a tone of astonishment, for the carriage had driven up to the back entrance to the Palace of the Tuileries. "It would be ridiculous for a poor captain of the army to aspire to the hand of one whose carriage conducts her to the abode of the Emperor of France."

Frederick dismissed the cabriolet, hastened to his lodgings, packed up his trunks, and proceeded forthwith to join the *depôt* of his regiment at Toulouse. But he slept not during the whole of that long and weary night: his imagination was constantly occupied with the mysterious occurrences of the last few days; and especially did he ponder upon the peerless charms of her to whom he had given his heart in a manner so unconditional that he felt it would never be in his power to reclaim and dispose of it again.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE FAIR STRANGER.—A TALE.

PART II.

FREDERICK APPLIES FOR LEAVE.—AN ENCOUNTER IN THE TUILERIES.—THE NOTARY.—THE CONCLUSION.

A YEAR passed away, and the lapse of time, which usually obliterates

the recollection of the deeds of former days, and absorbs in its Lethean stream the traces of previous passions, only added fresh fuel to the fire of Frederick's love. Often had he applied for leave, if only for a week, in order to enable him to fly to Paris, and attempt another desperate effort to pierce the mystery which involved the beautiful Clementine in an almost impenetrable gloom. But his colonel as sedulously refused this indulgence; and when questioned closely by the young captain relative to the cause of such harshness, frankly confessed that he acted according to superior commands, of the motives of which he was however ignorant.

"I shall then be obliged to take that which is so unjustly and unaccountably refused me," said Frederick, one morning when he had again vainly implored a short furlough.

"Young man, I implore you to be prudent, and not to think of so desperate a step," cried the colonel.

"I am determined," rejoined Frederick; and that very day, regardless of all consequences, he left his quarters and proceeded to the capital, bearing with him letters of introduction to the Count Delamarche, whose son was a brother officer and one of his most intimate friends.

On his arrival in Paris, the first visit he paid was to the Count Delamarche, to whom he presented his credentials, and from whom he experienced the most welcome reception. Prompted by the kind manners of the old nobleman to unburthen his mind of a portion of the secret that oppressed it, he frankly confessed the error he had been guilty of in leaving his regiment without permission; but he declared that existence in a state of uncertainty and suspense was no longer endurable.

"I can fully appreciate your feelings," said the Count; "it would, however, be acting an unfriendly part towards you not to remind you of the penalty you have incurred. We live in an age when a dereliction from military duty is one of the greatest crimes that can be committed; and you are aware that the great man, who has so often led his armies to battle and to glory, is inflexible in the strict maintenance of all the regulations and laws affecting his soldiers."

"I am prepared to suffer degradation, imprisonment, and disgrace," said Frederick: "but these will be preferable to a state of the most agonizing suspense. I love, my lord, a being to whom I have never spoken, who does not know me, and who, I have good reason to believe, moves in a high sphere of life. At the same time I am determined to seek her out, throw myself at her feet, declare my passion, and——"

"Be scorned or laughed at," added the Count, bestowing a glance of commiseration upon the young man. "However, your proceedings in that respect do not regard me; and I frankly confess that I should be averse to offer advice concerning the matter. I will interest myself in your behalf in reference to your breach of military duty, and will endeavour to avert the danger contingent to a court-martial. I am not devoid of influence with the Minister of War, and will attend to the business forthwith. To-morrow is my reception-day: I shall be happy to possess your company at my *soirée*."

The remainder of that day was spent by Frederick in the Café opposite the house of M. de Ruysan, in the Rue Vivienne. But he was disappointed in his hopes of seeing the beautiful Clementine. In the evening he hastened to Auteuil to mount guard at the gate of the Notary's country residence; but there were no lights in the rooms to indicate the presence of a soul.

He returned to Paris, retired to his couch, passed a feverish night, and rose at six in the morning, unrefreshed by the partial slumber that had rather contributed to his weariness than his comfort. The morning was fine, and from the windows of the hotel at which he lodged in the Rue de Rivoli, he was enabled to contemplate the beauty of the gardens of the Tuileries, the foliage of which were moist with the early dews. He thought that a ramble beneath those verdant shades, would refresh both his mind and body; and he hastened to the inviting scene. In those times the gates were open at that early hour.

Frederick rambled up and down the central avenue; and the blythe songs of the birds, the murmurs of the fountain, and the strain of the labourers proceeding on the quay at a little distance to their diurnal labours, only contributed to his wretchedness; for he remembered that they were happy and joyous, while he was one of the most persecuted victims of a capricious fortune. As he was turning the angle formed by the grove of trees at the extremity nearest the palace, he ran rudely against an individual who was walking hastily in the opposite direction; and stopping to apologise, he was immediately recognised by the stranger who had questioned him so imperiously, exactly a year before, at the gate of the Notary's country residence. The stranger was dressed in plain clothes, and on this occasion was not enveloped in his cloak; but his features seemed familiar to Frederick, who could not however recollect where he had previously encountered them, for on the night they met at Auteuil, it was quite dark.

"Frederick Grandet!" cried the stranger, surveying our hero with a glance which seemed to penetrate him to the soul.

"The same," returned Frederick; "and who has now to apologise for his rudeness—"

"A deserter!" interrupted the stranger, severely contracting his brows.

"Bad news travel quickly," observed the young man gloomily.

"M. de. Ruysan, the Notary, will be pleased to see you at his office at twelve this day," said the stranger, after a moment's reflection and without waiting for a reply, he passed rapidly on.

Frederick remained for some time rooted to the spot. The mysterious awe with which the stranger had twice inspired him, the intimate acquaintance he seemed to possess with all his proceedings, and the announcement he had made concerning the Notary's desire to see him, were ample food for the conjecture and reasoning of his imagination. That mystic stranger appeared to be his genius—but whether possessing the attribute of good or evil, he as yet knew not. He felt like a man wandering about in a perilous country, amidst a deep and impenetrable mist, with one bright star only illuminating the distant —far distant horizon.

The danger he had incurred, by absenting himself without leave from his regiment, distressed him but little. "Even if I be tried and

found guilty by a court-martial," said he to himself, as he retraced his steps to the Rue de Rivoli, "I will throw myself at the feet of the Emperor, confess all, and move that heart which report declares to be open to the pleading of wretchedness and sorrow. I know not his Majesty—I have never even seen the hero who has distinguished himself above all men that have ever existed in this world; but I feel convinced that Napoleon is generous and merciful, and that he will take into consideration the unjust and oppressive tyranny which has compelled me to take this step, by refusing me that leave which every other officer sought and obtained at pleasure."

The reader will scarcely require to be told that Frederick was punctual in his attendance at M. de Ruysan's office. The venerable Notary received him with the utmost affability and kindness of manner, desired him to be seated, and conversed upon a variety of topics before he opened the business which had originated the interview.

"You have left your regiment in rather a sudden manner," said the Notary at length, "and if I be not incorrect in my conclusions, your predilection in favour of a certain lady is the cause."

"Mademoiselle Clementine ——" began Frederick.

"Mademoiselle Clementin de Gaston," added the Notary, giving the entire name, which Frederic.. now heard for the first time. "And it is for her welfare and happiness that I am desired to solicit from you, as a gentleman—as an officer—and as a member of that society, the tranquillity of which no honest man ought to disturb—a cessation of——"

"Never! never! ejaculated the young captain, anticipating the nature of the Notary's request. "That is," he added, after a moment's pause, "unless the wish you now intimate be also the desire of Mademoiselle de Gaston herself."

"It is—I solemnly believe it to be!" cried M. de Ruysan.

"And wherefore? She does not even know me!" said Frederick.

"True," returned the Notary; "but it is useless to conceal from you the fact that a strange mystery hangs over that noble lady—that I am her guardian only in appearance; a superior power directs my actions—and that the very duration of that mystery depends upon the prosperity and eligibility of the marriage which may be sooner or later arranged for my ward."

"I care not," cried Grandet. "Let Mademoiselle de Gaston assure me with her own lips that any attempt on my part to force my addresses upon her, would be importunate—disagreeable, in fine—and I desist for ever: but if such testimony be withheld, I assure you, M. de Ruysan, that I shall leave no honourable means, to demonstrate my passion, untried—"

"You dare not," interrupted the Notary.

"I dare all," returned Frederick.

"Impossible!" cried M. de Ruysan; "in the face of such obstacles!"

"In the face of everything, Sir!" ejaculated the young man, striking his bosom forcibly with his hand. "Did I not leave my regiment, in spite of even the chance of incurring the resentment of Napoleon? and shall I now tremble at an idle menace?"

"But is this persecution of a young lady, who is a total stranger to you, decent or honourable?" persisted the Notary.

"Mine is an honourable passion," returned our hero; "and, as I before observed, I will leave unessayed no honourable means to obtain an introduction to Mademoiselle de Gaston, and declare my intentions. It may be that I shall be spurned—contemned—laughed at: at all events I shall know my fate!"

"Listen," said the Notary, his fine open countenance being suddenly overclouded with a dark and sinister expression, while his brows contracted, his hands trembled, his voice was thick, and his articulation hasty—"listen!" and as he spoke, he grasped our hero's arm, and pressed it violently with mechanical force. "Listen! You have deserted your regiment—you will be cashiered and turned into the wide world, a mendicant and a dishonoured man! Renounce all pretensions to the hand of Mademoiselle de Gaston, abandon your vain projects, consent to leave the empire, you shall be placed on half-pay, and a hundred thousand crowns shall be told down upon this table before you. The half of that sum shall moreover be continued annually so long as you consent to remain abroad!"

The Notary was an honourable and upright man; and he had evi dently done great violence to his feelings in making this proposition He sank upon his chair, wiped the large drops of perspiration from his forehead, and seemed to breathe more freely when he had named and described these conditions.

"Ah! dost thou think, old man, that love is dependent upon gold and silver? Dost thou imagine that the Roman satirist, were he alive now, and did he speak of Paris instead of his native city, would assert that all things here are venial? Oh! no—Sir: love is the purified silver—the metal divested of its ore and of its dross—the chaste production of the eternal mine which no antiquarian operative can exhaust! Believe me, Sir, I would sooner that Lucifer should claim me as his own, than that I should sell the passion I cling to more dearly than to life!"

"Young man," said the Notary, "were empires my reward, I would say no more. As a man of honour you declared yourself ready to renounce all pretension to the hand of Mademoiselle de Gaston, provided she herself informed you that your addresses were importunate. As a last resource—not as the last argument left to a bad cause—do I submit to this ordeal."

The Notary rang a bell—a servant answered the summons, and the man of business said, "Announce to Mademoiselle de Gaston that in a few minutes I shall pay my respects to her, accompanied by a stranger." The servant bowed and retired.

A marked emphasis was laid on the word stranger; and an uninterrupted silence ensued, till the Notary rose, and conducted Grandet to an apartment, in which Madame de Ruysan and the beauteous Clementine were seated.

There are many diamonds which glitter only at a distance,—there are others the water of which is the more resplendent the nearer you approach them: but seen at a distance, or near—in full dress, or morning attire—with the advantage of costly ornaments, or in all the natural simplicity of her virgin charms—Clementine was alike attractive, and equally beautiful. There was around her that halo of loveliness, that

effulgence of fascination which no mortal could resist: a glance from her was worth a monarch's ransom!

So thought Frederick Grandet, as he was now formally introduced to that woman of sublime beauty.

"Our interview need but be of one moment's duration," said the Notary: "the object of it is delicate, at the same time imperious.—*Mademoiselle*," he cried, turning towards the fair stranger, and addressing her emphatically and with significance, "this gentleman aspires to the honour of your hand!"

"I am not acquainted with *Monsieur*," said Clementine: and the tone in which these words were uttered, showed that the young lady was as anxious to silence the interrogatories of the Notary, as she could have been supposed solicitous to put an end to the pretensions of Frederick.

"And whatever might be the result of a long acquaintance, his addresses would be obnoxious?" suggested the Notary.

"Who dares pronounce a decision against fate? who would appeal against the decrees of destiny?" exclaimed Clementine; and having uttered these words, she rose and left the apartment.

"I am sorry your appeal has not succeeded as you could have wished," said Frederick, casting a glance full of irony upon the Notary.

"I have done my duty," returned M. de Ruysan.

"And could do no more," added his wife, evidently annoyed at the issue of the explanation.

At nine o'clock that evening Frederick repaired to the hotel of the Count Delamarche; and the first objects that met his enraptured eyes, as he entered the ball-room, were Mademoiselle de Gaston and Madame de Ruysan.

"Happy encounter!" said he to himself; and presuming upon the introduction of the morning, he bowed to the lovely Clementine.

The salutation was returned with any thing but coldness: a conversation commenced—Frederick solicited her hand for the first dance—and in a few moments he was almost as happy as he could desire. Clementine had evidently been made acquainted with the history of his passion, and the discourse insensibly turned upon the interesting topic.

"The proceeding of M. de Ruysan this day must have appeared extraordinary to you," said Frederick, "and may require a little explanation."

"That explanation has already been given," returned Clementine, in a soft but decided tone; "and I can assure you that my guardian did not please me by his conduct."

"This avowal is fraught with hopes and encouragement to me," whispered Grandet; "and God knows that I deserve a little of both, since I have resigned every thing to ——"

"Your *vis-à-vis* is waiting for you," interrupted Mademoiselle de Gaston, playfully.

While Grandet was engaged in *l'été*, Clementine drew the beautiful white kid glove from her more beautiful hand, in order to arrange a straggling curl which had escaped from the rich mass of tresses that

were parted above her brow; and when the figure of the dance brought her partner again opposite to her, she hastily replaced the glove—but not before the quick eye of her lover, in glancing towards those delicately tapered fingers, had detected upon one of them a ring which he had seen on the hand of the stranger whom he had met the same morning in the gardens of the Tuileries. He felt sick at heart—a ray of jealousy shot through his breast—a film passed over his eyes—and he accomplished confusedly and awkwardly the remainder of the *quadrille*. He was abstracted and silent during the rest of the evening; and the only circumstance which at all alleviated his distress, was the conviction that Clementine perceived it, and that she was at a loss to comprehend, while she at the same time sedulously endeavoured to ascertain the cause of it. This was, however, but a slight consolation, because it did not undeceive him as to the existence of a rival.

As he handed Mademoiselle de Gaston and Madame de Ruysan to their carriage, he was arrested by two Gendarmes in plain clothes; but the ceremony was not performed with such secrecy as to prevent the two ladies from being made aware of the cause of the interference of the unwelcome strangers.

"Ah! *Mademoiselle*," said the young Captain in a whisper as he retired from the door of the carriage, "the day when I first saw you in the Marché aux Fleurs, was an unfortunate one for me!"

At that moment the lamp over the gate-way of the Count Delamarche's mansion, threw a powerful ray of light upon the countenance of Clementine; and Frederick perceived that her eyes were filled with tears.

"Adieu!" said he; and the carriage rolled away from the door. "No—I have not a rival: she already appreciates the extent of my attachment," he thought within himself, as he turned to accompany the Gendarmes to the prison, whither they were compelled to conduct him.

On the following morning, a small parcel was delivered to him by the turnkey of the gaol. The superscription was in a beautiful and delicate female hand-writing, and although it was totally unknown to our hero, a vague hope made his heart leap within him. He was not disappointed; the envelope contained the identical ring he had seen upon Clementine's finger the night before. The ornamental portion of it consisted of a diamond set round with fine pearls; and his slight acquaintance with the symbolical meaning of oriental emblems made him at once aware that the word "Hope" was the interpretation of the device.

Ten days passed away, and one morning M. de Ruysan stood by the bed-side of the young prisoner, before the latter was awake.

"I bring you your discharge," said the worthy Notary, when Frederick was aroused from his slumbers; "and must request that you will instantly accompany me—"

"Whither? Oh, whither?" cried Frederick, impatiently.

"To my house at Auteuil," answered M. de Ruysan, with a cunning smile.

Grandet asked not another word: hope beat high in his bosom; and he was too happy to risk by an interrogation the destruction the delusion, if such it were. He hastily donned his clothes, accompanied the

Notary to the gate of the prison, and followed him into the same carriage in which he had seen Mademoiselle de Gaston seated on former occasions. In twenty minutes the vehicle stopped at the door of the house at Auteuil.

Frederick was ushered into a handsome apartment, and the Notary desired him to be seated.

"My business with you to-day is somewhat of a more pleasurable nature than it was a fortnight ago," said the old man with a smile. "Are you still determined to persevere in paying your addresses to Mademoiselle de Gaston?"

"In spite of all the powers and prisons in the universe," was the reply.

"I am then charged to inform you, Sir," continued the Notary, in a tone which showed the pleasure afforded him by the task he was performing, "that Mademoiselle de Gaston is at liberty to receive your addresses; and that if at the expiration of six months you feel that you can be happy with each other, no opposition will be made to your union."

"Oh! M. de Ruysan," cried Frederick, "can I believe my ears? or is this a delusive dream?"

"It is a reality, my dear Sir," rejoined the Notary. "The lady has the same fortune which was offered to you, when it was deemed expedient to procure your absence from the country. But since Mademoiselle de Gaston has herself interfered in your behalf, her father—"

"Her father!" cried Frederick; "I imagined she was an orphan, placed under your care."

"That secret, my dear Sir," said M. de Ruysan, "you can only be made acquainted with on your wedding day. The stranger whom you twice encountered in so mysterious a manner, is Clementine's father; and it is scarcely necessary to inform a man of the world like yourself, that the circumstances of her birth—her illegitimacy, in a word—have originated this mystery and these precautions."

"So long as I possess Clementine, M. de Ruysan," exclaimed Frederick, "I ask no more. Oh! when can I throw myself at her feet? I long to have an opportunity of declaring that passion which is consuming me."

"I will not delay your happiness," answered the Notary; and opening a door which communicated with another *suite* of apartments, he ushered the overjoyed young lover into the presence of his mistress, and of Madame de Ruysan.

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Six months passed rapidly away; and at the expiration of the prescribed period, Frederick Grandet was united to the beautiful Clementine de Gaston. The *élite* of the fashionable world of Paris were present at the bridal, and amongst them the kind-hearted Count Delamarche, his son, and the colonel of Frederick's regiment.

On the following morning, M. de Ruysan placed the title deeds-connected with his ward's property into the hands of our hero, saying, "The mystery need now exist no longer. But, ah! you cannot wonder that such precautions were necessary, in reference to the future felicity of your wife."

Frederick cast his eyes over the documents, and started as if an angel had crossed his path. There was a large seal appended to the papers—the device of that seal was the imperial arms of France—and the signature beneath was the name of NAPOLEON BONAPARTE!

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE PARTICULARS OF THE RAMBLE OF MR. TONY AND MR. SAMUEL WELLER, ACCOMPANIED BY MESSIEURS PORRETT AND KNACKERS, THROUGH A SMALL PORTION OF PARIS, ARE SUCCINCTLY RELATED IN THIS CHAPTER.

It was a highly edifying spectacle, to behold Mr. Weller, senior, his son, and the two prize-fighters, lounging through the streets of Paris. The first maintained his eyes and his mouth constantly wide open, in order to express his astonishment at all he saw; the second walked along with the most imperturbable coolness, his hat over his left eye, his body in a swing, and his hands in his pockets; and Messieurs Knackers and Porrett discussed in very audible voices the particulars of a fight which had taken place within their own memories some years previously.

"Wot's that there, Sammy?" demanded Mr. Weller, senior, stopping before a shop-window in which a great quantity of bank-notes and coins of all nations were exhibited.

"A money changer's," was the reply: "if you vants a bank-note for a thousand francs cashed, you goes in there and pays ten sous to have it done."

"I alvays heerd say the French wos wery capreeshus, Sammy," observed Mr. Weller, senior; "an' this proves it: but if they're a constantly changin' their money in that kind o' vay, wot 'll they do vith their vives?"

"Ah! wot indeed?" cried Sam; and as he could not answer the question with any degree of satisfaction to himself, he whistled a lively tune.

"Wery bad pavement they has just here, Samivel," remarked the old gentleman, as they were passing down the Rue Montmartre; "wot can be the reason o' that there?"

"Cos ven there's a revylootion in this here country," replied Mr. Weller, junior, "the people as hasn't got no guns or bagginets, fights vith pavin'-stones; and as them kinds o' popylar ebullitions is of wery frequent ok-kurrence in these parts, the pavin'-stones isn't laid down exceedin' tight, cos they doesn't know how soon they may be rekvired."

"Wery vell explained, Samivel," cried Mr. Weller the elder, surveying his son with the greatest admiration and delight. "And now tell your old father, Sammy, wot is that wery fat little gen'leman, in the blue regimentals vith spectacles on, a-sailin' down the street vith the wery long sword as keeps gettin' atween his legs?"

"That's a national guard," answered Sam.

"Wot's a naytional guard?" demanded his father. "Not the guard o' the mail-coaches, is it, Samivel?"

"No, old grinnin' face," dutifully responded Mr. Weller, junior: "but von o' the sogers as per-tects the nation."

"A feller as mounts guard on his-self, eh, Samivel?" cried the elder Mr. Weller. "I des say he's a out-an-outer by vay of a soger, 'specially at the mess-table, ven he gets over the biled beef."

"Wery rum chaps to deal vith, them national guards is," observed Sam.

"Is they though?" said his father.

"Is they?" cried Sam, disdainfully: "is they not? Vy, it wos but a veek or two ago, that a English gen'leman as wos a-stayin' at Meurice's hot-tel, ordered a pair o' boots of a shoe-maker as wos re-commended wery favourably to him. So the boots come home, and the gen'lemen tried 'em on; but they wos too big in von place, an' too small in another. So the gen'leman flies in a passion, and blows up the boot-maker like nothin' at all. 'You're a wery imperent feller, you air,' says the gen'leman, 'to bring me sich a pair o' boots as them there. I won't have 'em at no price.'—'But I means to have my price, howms'ever,' cried the cobler; and he swore that the boots wos capital good uns.—'You shall make me another pair,' says the gen'leman.—'I von't,' says the cobler.—'You shall,' says the gen'leman, 'or else I'll kick you and the boots down stairs together vith as little ceremony as if you wos my own vife.'—'Do,' says the cobler in a wery aggriwatin' vay. — So the gen'leman *did* kick the chap down stairs."

"Is that all, Samivel?" said Mr. Weller the elder.

"Vy, how can it be all, ven I haven't come to the pint yet?" demanded his son, indignant at the interruption.

"Oh! now then to the pint!" cried the old gentleman.

"A few hours elapsed," continued Sam, "an' the gen'leman had quite forgot all about the boots, ven he receives a wisit from a chap as he had never seen afore. 'I'm come on the part o' *Mounseer* Such-a-von,' says he, 'to demand saytisfaction for the insult you putt upon him this mornin',' says he.—'I ain't insulted no gen'leman this mornin', my dear Sir,' says the Englishman.—'Yes, you have,' says t'other. — 'Who?' demands the gen'leman. — 'Vy, *Mounseer* Such-a-von (never mind his name, cos I doesn't know it now) 'the shoe-maker,' wos the re-ply.—The gen'leman laughed wery cheerful at this here; but he laughed on t'other side o' his mouth ven the strauger pulled out a challenge, and crams it into his hand. 'I ain't a-goin' for to fight vith a shoe-maker,' cries the gen'leman.—'Then ve'll chalk you up as a coward and a liar,' says the other.—Vell, the result on it all wos that the gen'leman con-sulted his friends, found out that the shoe-maker wos a captain in the National Guards, and was obleeged to fight him."

"An' wot wos the consek-vence?" asked the elder Mr. Weller.

"No harm done," replied Sam.

"Vy did the shoe-maker's second threaten to chalk t'other feller up as a liar, ven he hadn't told no lies?" enquired the old gentleman.

"Oh! it's the fashion in all duels, vether in France or England," answered Sam. "If you vant to insult a gen'leman you must al-vays

begin by tellin' him he's a liar an' a scoundrel; an' if that von't make his blood get up, you must tell him he ain't no gen'leman at all."

"Wery good, Samivel," exclaimed Mr. Weller, senior; "I shan't forget to do so the fust opportunity as per-sents itself."

"And if all that won't do," suggested Mr. Porrett, "you must pitch into him."

"Aye, aye," exclaimed the old coachman, "that's the patent settler as is better than all med i-cines. Ven you wos a small hinfant, Samivel, if ever you wos taken ill, I always per-ferred givin' you a small dose o' the birch-rod to all the doctor's pills and potions in the vorld. I raythor think, too, that them's the reasons o' your havin' turned out so vell in life, Sammy."

"You're a wery wirtuous old man, you air," returned the younger Mr. Weller. "But foller me, old dot-an'-go-von, an' you shall jist see more coaches in von place than ever you heerd on in your mental wisions;" and as he thus spoke, he conducted his revered father and his two friends into the great diligence yard of the Messageries Royales.

And a very bustling place it was. There were about fifteen or sixteen diligences in the yard, some about to start, others having just arrived. Postilions in their large jack-boots were cracking their whips on one side, and hostlers were harnessing or unharnessing teams of horses on the other. Porters and commissioners, bending beneath the weight of trunks and portmanteaus, were running backwards and forwards in all directions; and here and there groups of passengers, either just set down, or just about to get into the coaches, were wiling away a few moments in a quiet chat.

"A wery business like place, this here," said the elder Mr. Weller, bestowing his critical approval upon the scene by a most expressive nod of the head; "wery business-like; an' yet them post-boys, vith their rum-lookin' boots an' spurs, isn't quite so reglar as the coachmen you meets vith at the Bell Savage. They ain't got the corpilance, Sammy, as makes the English coachman the enwiable bein' he is."

"Pr'haps their wittles doesn't per-duce the same effects," observed Sam.

"It isn't that, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, senior, in a most mysterious whisper; "it isn't the wittles, Sammy—it's the drinks as does it;" —and having thus explained himself, the old gentleman thrust his fingers into his son's ribs, retreated a pace or two, shook his head ominously, and then added, in his most solemn tone, "It's only ve coachmen as understands them there things."

"So I should think," said Sam, very coolly.

"Ah! it's a great pity that the genevine breed o' English coachmen is a-goin' out as rapid as possible," continued old Mr. Weller. "You may look in wain for the good fellers as used to get so precious lushy they couldn't sit on their boxes! Wot a loss they has been to the nation!"

"A wery great loss they must be," said Sam.

"Loss, eh—to be sure they is!" exclaimed his father, in a tone which seemed to imply astonishment that the fact of their being a loss could have been ever doubted. "Vere do you see a English coachman o' the new school as can take his sixteen tumblers o' grog be-

twixt the Bell Savage in London, and the Fountain at Portsmouth, to say nothin' o' ale and bitters, or pints o' purl vich inwariably goes for nothin'? Them chaps doesn't exist any longer, Sammy; and that's the reason o' them rail-roads being so wery successful."

"To be sure it is," said Mr. Porrett.

"Without a doubt," coincided Mr. Knackers.

"You're in your own element now, as the gen'leman said ven he chucked his vife into the tub o' hot vater," cried Sam, by vay of encouraging his father to proceed in his discourse.

"An' if coachmen goes to rack an' ruin in this kind o' vay, continued Mr. Weller, senior, "I don't hesitate for to say, that the nation itself 'll soon be done up. England never flourished till she had stage-coaches; an' the reason vy the selvidges isn't as civilised as us, is 'cos *they* hasn't got coaches. Do you think them cannibals ud venture to eat up a stage-coachman?"

Mr. Tony Weller glanced around him with the satisfaction and triumph of a man who has put an unanswerable question in the shape of an argument—commonly called "a pozer," in order to meet the idiomatic expression of the "*argumentum ad hominem*," used by the respectable ancients.

The above discourse took place in the immediate vicinity of a diligence, which certain hostlers were preparing for a journey to Brussels. The baggage was already heaped upon the summit of the ponderous machine—the wheels had been greased—and the five horses were standing very quietly while their keepers fastened the ropes to the splinter-bars and elsewhere, as the case might be.

One man in particular, who was so engaged, attracted the elder Mr. Weller's attention. The horse, with which this man was busying himself, happened to have a real leathern trace, (how happy the animal, or rather its sides, ought to have been!); and the groom seemed amazingly puzzled how to arrange it properly.

"Wot a' excruciatin' fool that there feller is," cried Mr. Weller the elder; and darting forward, he pushed the hostler aside, seized hold of the trace, and began attaching it to its right place, with all the skill and ability an apprenticeship of five-and-twenty years could be supposed to have taught him.

For a moment the hostler was too much astonished by the abruptness of the proceeding to utter a word; but as soon as his sudden surprise was passed, he dealt a most vigorous push to Mr. Weller, senior, and muttered certain French expressions which Mr. Weller, junior, fully understood, and highly reprobated.

"Don't you come a shovin' yourself on me, young man," cried the elder Mr. Weller, "or I'll show you the reason vy."

"*Sacré mille tonnerres!*" exclaimed the irritated functionary, repeating the thrust.

Mr. Tony Weller uttered not another word at that moment; but very coolly taking off his coat, he put himself into a highly interesting and graceful attitude of pugilism, and began sparring away like clockwork.

"Come along, my fine feller," cried the excellent old man; and by way of inducing his antagonist to come on, he knocked him about three yards off with one blow of his clenched fist.

"Holloa, old double-vicket!" ejaculated Sam; "wot does all this mean?"

"Let 'em be, let 'em be!" roared Messrs. Porrett and Knackers. "A mill! a mill!"

"Come on, will 'ee?" cried the venerable English coachman: "I'm rayther old, but I'm wery tough, an' can bear a great deal, as the gen'leman said ven he heard that his son wos transported for life;" and as his mouth gave vent to this beautiful image, his fists dealt a couple of the neatest blows upon the Frenchman's nose and chin that the most enthusiastic *amateur* could wish to see.

"Beautiful, ain't it?" said Mr. Knackers to Mr. Porrett.

"Quite a pictur'," was that gentleman's reply.

But the beautiful picture was speedily defaced by the prompt interference of Mr. Samuel Weller, who rushed forward, seized his revered parent by that part of the neck which in fashionable society is denominated the "scruff," and bestowed a kick upon the hostler, which precipitated him between the legs of one of the team.

"Wot air you up to now, Sammy?" cried the old gentleman, highly incensed at this interruption. "I ain't half polished that feller off yet."

"It's rayther dear vork to make a blackin' brush o' one's self in this country, and to take a man for the boot," returned Sam, following up the same poetic strain of eastern allegory: "so jist you come along, an' let them there fellers fasten their own ropes an' leathers. Too many cooks spiles the broth, as the man said ven he married his fourth vife an' got found out."

And with these words, the excellent son dragged his father from the diligence-yard, followed by Messieurs Porrett and Knackers.

"Let us jist go an' take a quiet chop somevhere or another, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, as they passed along the Rue Notre Dame des Victoires; "an' then in the evenin' ve can pay our respects to the gov'ner."

Mr. Weller, senior's hint was attended to: Sam conducted his father and companions to a modest *restaurant* in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, and by the aid of a bowl of punch after dinner, the time was easily wiled away till nine o'clock.

"Ve'll jist have a coach, Samivel," said Mr. Tony Weller, "and pro-ceed to the gov'ner's place. Wot's the French for jarvey?"

"*Cocher*," returned Sam. "Why?"

"Cos I'm determined to prac-tise French, Sammy; an' I'll go an' call the coach myself. It'll do me good to say any thin' to a coachman, although he is only a hackney von."

Sam Weller did not attempt to interfere with his father's wishes; and the old gentleman stepped into the street, and hailed a hackney-coach.

"*Cochon!*" * cried Mr. Weller, the elder, as loudly as he could bawl.

The driver of the vehicle gazed vacantly around him, and puffed away at the short black pipe which he held in his mouth.

"*Cochon!*" roared old Weller.

The person thus strangely adjured, darted an angry glance in the direction whence the summons proceeded.

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* *Cochan* signifies "a pig," and is generally applied as a most opprobious epithet in France.

"*Cochon!*" reiterated Mr. Tony Weller: "*Cochon—Cochon*, I say! *Cochon!*"

And every time he uttered the word, he bestowed an additional emphasis upon it.

"Who's that bawling after me in this kind of way?" exclaimed the driver in his own native French.

"*Cochon!*" was the repeated cry.

"He *must* mean me," said the driver of the hackney-coach to himself, pulling up his horses, and glancing towards Mr. Weller, senior, with fire flashing from his eyes, and sparks from his pipe.

"*Cochon!* vy don't ye draw up a-von side o' the vay?" continued the veteran English coachman. "Wot's the use o' lettin' me stand here and cry myself hoorse? Wery pleasant vays these Paris jarveys has about 'em, to be sure! *Cochon!* Come off your coach-box or you'll get into the wrong box vith me."

Very pleasant indeed was the way in which the coachman, thus appealed to, received that which he took for meditated abuse. He leapt from his dickey, alighted in the street, and then stepped up to Mr. Weller with his nose and fists prominent.

"Now then, old feller, down vith the steps, an' look alive," said Mr. Weller.

And the man *did* look alive; and the symptoms of existence which he gave were manifested by a couple of vigorous blows dealt upon Mr. Weller's face, to the great astonishment of that unsuspicious old gentleman.

In the mean time, Sam had been anxiously waiting for the return of his father; and suspecting that there was something wrong again in consequence of his protracted absence, he at length determined upon seeking his respected parent. But no sooner had he stept into the street than he espied Mr. Weller, senior, engaged in a terrible encounter with the hackney-coach driver. A Gendarme came up to the scene of action, almost at the same moment as Sam; and to the infinite delight of the latter, the officer was no other than the kind-hearted Dumont, whom accident had again sent to aid one of our English heroes.

"You see, Sir," said Sam to the Gendarme, when the combatants were separated, "that this here feller is my father, as is just come from England vith more money than brains. Ven purses is full, heads is empty;—that's a prowerb. So, happen vot vill, he must get hisself into all manner o' scrapes, an' messes, an' unpleasantness."

"Wery true, Sammy," cried his father, winking an approval of all that his son was saying. "You're a super-excellent patent neverfailin' always-goin' ingine o' defence, you air, Samivel."

"But, thanks to you, Sir," continued Sam, addressing himself to the Gendarme, "he's out o' this here mess now. So the best thing he can do is to come off vith me an' see the gov'ner at vonce."

"Mr. Pickwick, I presume, is the gentleman you allude to," said Dumont.

"Precisely, Sir," returned Sam.

"In that case," added the Gendarme, "I will accompany you;—it is now a long time since I have seen your excellent master, whom I esteem highly; and I shall be delighted to take advantage of this opportunity of paying my respects to him."

Sam Weller and his father bade adieu to Messieurs Porrett and Knackers, and accompanied the kind-hearted Dumont to Mr. Pickwick's lodgings in the Rue Royale.

Mr. Pickwick and his friends returned home at an earlier hour than was their custom when they went out to dine; and their astonishment when they encountered the elder Mr. Weller, may be readily imagined. Mr. Pickwick ordered his faithful domestic, Sam, to brew a mighty bowl of punch forthwith, and he and his father were allowed to sit down with the gentleman and partake of it, to the infinite delight of the worthy Dumont, who was highly pleased with this picture of English sociability.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THIS IS A SHORT CHAPTER, CONSISTING CHIEFLY OF CONVERSATION, BUT CONCLUDING WITH AN ANNOUNCEMENT WHICH MAY LEAD TO SOMETHING INTERESTING HEREAFTER.

"What a fortunate thing it is that M. Dumont is invariably in the way to assist us or our friends, in all calamities," observed Mr. Pickwick, when they were comfortably seated round the table.

"A Gendarme sees many singular coincidences in his life," observed Dumont. "And not the least extraordinary of my adventures was the detection of a murderer some few years ago at Aulnay-le-Vicomte."

"How was that?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Aye, wot wos it?" demanded old Mr. Weller, who thought it very polite to stick his hands upon his knees, round his arms, and stare at the Gendarme full in the face, in order to impress that individual with an idea that he was going to pay the greatest attention to all he said.

"About five years ago there was a dreadful murder, committed under aggravated circumstances of horror," began Dumont, "in a bye-street in one of the worst quarters of Paris. The victims were an old man and his wife,—the assassin was their own son! The murder was not discovered for some hours after it was perpetrated; and then every engine of the police,—and you know we have the reputation of being the most cunning and skilful body of functionaries in the world,—was set to work to detect the malefactor. But all agility, research, and investigation were useless: the criminal had evidently decamped from Paris as soon as he had accomplished the bloody deed, and in process of time the matter was forgotten as much as those terrible episodes in the history of mankind ever *can* be obliterated from the memory. Three years passed away, and during that period I was employed principally in Paris and its environs. The biography of a Gendarme is, probably the most singular that could be written;—the reproach of want of interest or sameness never could reasonably be applied to it. And, in truth, during those three years I saw much to grieve, to astonish, and enlighten me. The intrigues of the police, the crimes to which sad poverty is compelled to have recourse, and the wonderful

celerity with which they nearly all are discovered as rapidly as they are accomplished—all this formed ample food for my wonderment, experience, and conjecture. But to be brief;—three years elapsed from the period when I, together with others of my comrades, were employed to trace the author of the horrible deed which I mentioned ere now."

"An' vich as yet wos not diskivered," said Mr. Weller, senior. "Go on, Sir: it's wery pretty."

"At the expiration of those three years," continued Dumont with a smile, "I was despatched to Aulnay-le-Vicomte on the most particular business."

"I 'spose they changes about you Johnny Darmies jist as they changes us coachmen in England, from von road to another," cried the elder Mr. Weller.

"Pray, Mr. Weller, do not interrupt this gentleman," said Mr. Pickwick; "you can make your observations afterwards."

"Wery true, Sir, I never thought o' that," returned the old coachman. "Go on, Sir."

"To Aulnay-le-Vicomte I proceeded, in obedience to superior orders," resumed the Gendarme, "and stopped at a small inn while I transacted the business which formed the object of my mission. One evening I was seated by the kitchen fire, smoking a cigar, and conversing with a stranger who was placed opposite to me; when the conversation turned upon the late robberies and murders which had been committed in that neighbourhood. The stranger was a man who evidently belonged to the operative class, as his attire and language seemed to testify; but he appeared excessively well acquainted with Paris and all that had taken place there a few years previously. We drank our wine, and smoked—I a cigar, and he his pipe, till a late hour; when I proposed to retire for the night. He however expressed a wish to empty another bottle, and I acceded to the proposition. The stranger refilled his pipe, and lighted it with a letter which he took from his pocket. He then passed the paper to me, as I had just extracted another cigar from my case. While I was lighting my cigar, my eyes fell upon the folded letter which I held in my hand, and a certain name that met my glance instantly attracted my attention. I reflected for a moment, and as if this circumstance had suddenly stirred up all my slumbering reminiscences concerning a particular individual, I immediately called to mind the description of the murderer whom I had vainly sought three years previously. There could not be a doubt of it. In front of me sate the assassin; and I was no longer surprised that an operative at Aulnay-le-Vicomte should be so well acquainted with Paris. I accordingly asked him if he had ever been to the metropolis. He replied in the affirmative; I enquired how long a period had elapsed since his visit, and he, probably unsuspicious of any danger, at once informed me that he was in Paris three years previously. 'Do you recollect a terrible murder which was committed upon two old people by their unnatural son?' I demanded.—The villain gave a start which nearly broke his pipe in his mouth: he however recollected himself, and deliberately answered in the negative.—'You know more about that deed,' said I, 'than you choose to admit.'—'What do you mean? What would you infer?' cried the guilty wretch, and this time his pipe fell from his mouth and was

oroken into small pieces upon the floor. — 'I mean,' was my answer, 'that a most extraordinary coincidence has detected you. Nay—do not start! you are my prisoner!' and as I spoke I laid a brace of pistols by my side upon the table.—'You are mistaken,' cried the murderer, in a hollow tone of voice.—'That you must induce others to believe,' was my reply. 'Upon this paper is a word which aroused my conjectures —it is the name of yourself and your murdered parents! I shall not take the trouble to peruse all that remains unburnt in my hands: the commissary of police may fulfil that duty.'—'I see,' said he in a hurried voice, 'that it is useless to deny the truth. I am a wretch unfit to live; and still life is dear to me! Not far from hence, concealed in a thicket of the wood, are eight thousand francs, the relics of that sum which induced me to imbrue my hands in human gore. Release me, and the money shall be your's!'—'Villain,' cried I 'would you make others as vile as yourself? Know you not that he who suffers the murderer to escape, is as it were an accomplice in the deed? No your money is defiled with blood; and whoever received it as a bribe, would receive the thirty pieces of silver from the hands of Judas. Prepare yourself to accompany me to the office of the commissary!' —The guilty wretch fell upon his knees, implored me to release him, and wept like a child. I bound his arms—he made but a slight resistance—and in a few moments he was safely lodged in the town-gaol. Two months afterwards he suffered upon the guillotine, at the Barriere du Trone, on the ourskirts of Paris."

"It is seldom that the guilty escape," observed Mr. Pickwick, when this anecdote was brought to a conclusion.

"They invariably commit some error or folly which betrays them," returned the Gendarme. "Had that man destroyed all letters which he received, and especially this one, which was from his mistress in an adjacent town, he would probably have been alive at this minute."

"Very true," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"Vell," said Mr. Weller senior, "I never had the pleasure o' sittin' in the company of a Johnny Darmy afore; and I alvays heerd say that they wos exceedin' rum customers to come across; but blowed if I don't think they 're jist like other men."

"Wot are you gammonin' at now, old purple wisage?" said Sam. "A wery strange effect the punch seems to perduce on your brain."

"You have just come from England, Sir, I presume?" said the Gendarme.

"An' wery right you air to presume that, Sir," replied Mr. Weller the elder; "cos never wos presumption more varrantable than that ere. But I didn't driv' myself, Sir,—nor would I wentur to driv' von o' them diligences o' your'n; an' wery odd it is that them chaps vith their long vhips, and vith no reins to their leaders, is able to maintain any degree o' order amung their cattle. But they twist in an' out the narrer streets jist as vell as the vide 'uns. I tell you wot it is, Sir," added Mr. Weller. with a very serious countenance, and staring right in the face of the Gendarme, "you'll eks-cuse me, Sir,—I means no offence,—but your're a wery sing'lar nation; wery sing'lar, sure-ly."

"Now then, old image!" cried Sam; "you're wery perlite, you air, as the gen'leman said to the creditor vich pervided him vith a lodgin free gratis for nothin' in the King's Bench."

"Talkin' o' the King's Bench, Samivel," exclaimed Mr. Weller senior, "I paid a wisit to that there finishin' academy for young noblemen and gen'lemen some time back, cos there was a feller there as I knowed in better times. A wery rum place is that there Bench, gen'lemen,—much more curioser than the Fleet, of vich some von amongst us had a sample;"—and as he uttered these words, he bestowed a wink of uncommon significance upon Mr. Pickwick, who nearly choked himself with the punch which he swallowed in order to pretend that he did not notice Mr. Weller's allusion.

"Vy is it so wery odd?" demanded Sam. "I don't s'pose the laws is different there; but me and the guv'ner ought to know somethin' about law, as the gen'leman observed whose father was hanged for horse-stealin'."

"Vy is it?" echoed old Mr. Weller, "cos the people there is wery queer. Some on 'em is so exceedin' proud, t'others so wery wulgar an' low, and t'others so wastly addicted to drinkin', that the whole place is quite a fernomenon. The proud uns hasn't a farthin' in their pockets—the wulgar uns ought to know better—an' the drunken chaps is so wery lively an' dirty."

"Not unlike our debtors' prison in the Rue de Clichy, I should suppose?" said M. Dumont.

"Sometimes, as I heerd my friend say," continued Mr. Weller, "a feller comes in for somethin' besides debt—p'raps for libel, or thrashing a defenceless old man as wos too much of a gen'leman to accept his challenge to fight vith pistols, or some such a thing,—an' then *he* thinks it necessary to give his-self airs; so he puts on a sort o' smock frock—."

"What does he do that for?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"Cos he thinks its wery fine, to be sure, Sir," answered old Mr. Weller; "an' then he svaggers up an' down the prison, an' looks vith contempt on them as is in for debt. Wery sure he is that he'll never be in for debt his-self, cos he'll never find no von for to trust him."

"Is that the case?" said Mr. Pickwick, considerably edified by these remarks, and perceiving in Mr. Weller's observations a very just satire upon the ridiculous pride of those individuals who assume an air of importance in a place where nearly all distinctions are levelled by the unsparing decrees of misfortune.

Indeed, the English metropolis is at this moment infested by a race of young men who are of no earthly use either to society or to themselves. They probably fly from their creditors, or from the still more dreaded presence of starvation, hasten to join any military expedition which the rulers, or would-be rulers of foreign nations are carrying on against their neighbours or their subjects, desert from one side to another, return to England, and are deservedly shunned by all upright and good men for their conduct. They then hope to redeem their characters by enacting the bully, and exercising their physical superiority upon the person of some feeble individual who deems them unfit for his acquaintance. An action is the result—the culprits are punished as they deserve—but the stupid distribution of the law allows them to pass the time of that imprisonment to which the tribunal appealed to has condemned them, in a debtor's instead of a felon's gaol. So far from being sent to the treadmill, which they so richly merit,

they are allowed to intrude themselves into that tenement where the victims of misfortune, and not the agents of moral or social outrage should alone be permitted to abide. And happy is it for them if they can find friends or dupes to maintain them while they suffer the penalty of that cowardly and indecent conduct, which began in the most treacherous desertion, and ended in the most disgusting bullying.

But let us return to the jovial party, whom we left for a moment to make the above remarks.

Mr. Weller, senior, was in the midst of an amusing anecdote, and Mr. Pickwick was in the midst of an excellent glass of punch—Mr. Tupman was fast asleep in his chair—Mr. Winkle and Mr. Snodgrass seemed very much inclined to imitate their friend's example, each having one eye close shut, and the other only half open—and M. Dumont and Mr. Weller were listening very patiently to the old coachman's story, when a tremendous ring at the front door bell cut short the anecdote, interrupted Mr. Pickwick in the discussion of his punch, made Mr. Samuel Weller start upon his legs, awoke Mr. Tupman, and compelled Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle to open their eyes.

"Who can this be, at eleven at night?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Ah! who indeed?" echoed Mr. Tupman, rubbing his eyes.

"That is exactly what I want to know," returned Mr. Pickwick, looking sternly upon his follower through his memorable spectacles.

'Oh, it is, is it?" cried Mr. Tupman. "Well—I dare say we shall see when Sam has opened the door."

Mr. Weller, junior, hastened to answer the summons at the front door, and returned to the room ushering in a tall Gendarme, six feet high, the very appearance of whom frightened Mr. Snodgrass into hysterics, and Mr. Winkle behind the curtain.

"Do not be alarmed, gentlemen," cried Dumont; "it is only one of my men, whom I informed that I was coming to pass an hour or two with you, in order that he should know where to find me in case of my presence being required."

This announcement tranquillized the gentlemen present; Mr. Snodgrass turned his hysterics off in a violent cough, and Mr. Winkle emerged from behind the curtain, while Dumont conversed with the Gendarme who had just arrived, in their own language, and in a hurried tone of voice.

"What do you think the meaning of this can be?" enquired Mr. Tupman of Mr. Pickwick.

"I have been conjecturing for these last ten minutes," answered that truly learned and great man; "and the result of my reflection is—"

"Is what?" cried Mr. Tupman, impatiently.

"Is, that I cannot come to any feasible conclusion," answered Mr. Pickwick.

It is evident that Mr. Tupman felt the entire weight of this erudite reply, from the circumstance of his not asking Mr. Pickwick any more questions; although it is just probable that he had not obtained all the information he required.

"Gentlemen," said M. Dumont, when he had conversed for about ten minutes with the stranger, "I am going to perform a very unpleasant office. A female has been detected in a most audacious cheat, and is now in charge at the office of the nearest commissary of police,

I must hasten thither to witness the depositions, and superintend her conveyance to prison. But this female is not a stranger to some of you who are here present."

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Pickwick. "It cannot be the wife of our grocer, I hope!"

"Nor the apple-woman at the corner of the Faubourg St. Honore?" said Mr. Tupman, with tears in his expressive eyes.

"Nor the old woman in the great-coat, who sweeps the crossing by the Madeline?" exclaimed Mr. Winkle.

"Nor the pale and sentimental-looking female that sells matches round the corner?" demanded the poetic Mr. Snodgrass.

"No, gentlemen," returned M. Dumont, with a smile; "it is neither the grocer's wife, the beggar, the sweeper of the crossings, nor the apple-woman. But the prisoner is one who has cheated at least three of you."

"Anastasie de Volage!" cried Mr. Tupman.

"The same," rejoined the Gendarme.

"Wot is them chaps a-talkin' about, Sammy?" demanded old Mr. Weller, in a whisper, as he pointed to the Gendarmes. "Is any von to be pitched into; cos if there's a little o' that vork rekvired, ve'll soon do it, you an' me, Samivel."

"It's only a young o'oman as has got herself into a scrape," returned Sam; "an' so there ain't no necessity for pitchin' into people."

"Vell, I'm rayther sorry for that," said Sam's father.

"Vy?" demanded the dutiful son.

"Cos there's nothin' like a little exercise, Samivel, as the wery old donkey observed ven they made him get up from his death-bed to carry nine gen'lemen in a tax cart to Green'ich Fair."

"Now, you cut off, old feller," said Sam.

"Wery much obleeged for your adwice, Samivel," returned Mr. Weller, "an' shan't fail for to foller it. Good night, Samivel. Gen-'lemen, I vish you all a good night's rest, an' thank'ee kindly for your ciwilities."

With these words Mr. Weller, senior, departed; and the two Gendarmes having bade adieu to the gentlemen present, and to Mr. Samuel Weller, also withdrew to attend to Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE OFFICE OF A COMMISSARY OF POLICE.—THE DISSATISFIED HUSBAND.—A GENTLEMAN AND A DONKEY.—A RELIGIOUS AND HARD-WORKING BOY.—MR. BENJAMIN JUDDERY AND THE LOVE-LETTER.—AN INEBRIATE GENTLEMAN.—MADEMOISELLE ANASTASIE.

In a room, adorned with mirrors and chandeliers, and furnished even in a costly manner, sate one of the four Commissaries of Police for the second *arrondissement* of Paris, with a clerk on his right hand, a police-agent on his left, and a tri-coloured scarf round his waist. Near the desk behind which the public functionary was seated, stood Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, beside two Gendarmes; and in one corner of the apartment her respectable old mother was weeping in an arm-chair, with a case-bottle of brandy in one hand, and a cambric pocket handkerchief in the other. The use of the one was to dry up the moisture of the stomach, and the latter to absorb the humidity of the eyes. The feelings of the ancient lady were deeply affected by the ignominious position of her daughter; and in order to give free vent to them, she from time to time bestowed an indignant glance or an emphatic imprecation upon the Commissary of Police and his agents.

Anastasie herself was a bold girl, and on occasions like these, she disdained the use of tears. She, however, kept her eyes fixed upon the ground, and seemed more annoyed at the lachrymose deportment of her mother, than at the perils of her own peculiar situation.

"We will examine and dispose of a few cases of trivial importance," said the Commissary, as the clock at the hotel of the Ministry of Marine struck the hour of ten, A.M.; "and, in the meantime, you may withdraw into an adjoining room."

These last words were addressed to Mademoiselle Anastasie, who was accordingly conducted into another apartment, whither she was immediately followed by her mother. The Commissary then signified his readiness to hear complaints, receive charges, and administer all other duties that came within the scope of his official attributes.

A little shrivelled, miserable-looking, old man stepped forward, and solicited the advice of the magistrate in an affair which he stated to be of considerable delicacy and importance, and which, after a great deal of hesitation, he explained as follows:—

"I am a man, Sir, in a most respectable line of business, and have always led a happy and a merry life up to yesterday; and yesterday all my grievances began, and from yesterday will my future history be a sad contrast with the annals of my previous existence. I was foolish enough, *M. le Commissaire*, to take unto myself a wife; but when I bargained for a wife, I did not think that I was going to espouse an amazon for ferocity, and a woman who is so deeply indebted to all the mechanics and artizans in Paris, that her custom alone would be a fortune to them, were they paid"

"You speak in enigmas," said the Commissary. "Explain yourself."

"That is very easily done," continued the irate old gentleman; "and in a few words. I paid my addresses to a young lady, whom I fancied to be complete and sound in wind and limb like other women; but when the secrets of the toilet were disclosed, I found that she wore false teeth made in the Palais Royal, a glass eye fabricated in the Rue Saint Honoré, a cork leg that emanated from a shop in the Place des Victoires, a wig from the fashionable barber's in the Rue de la Paix, and a variety of other artificial charms which I cannot now enumerate."

"And in what way do you wish me to assist you?" enquired the Commissary.

"In what way!" shouted the little man. "I will tell you the rest, and then you shall see in what way you can assist me. When I reproached her for having thus deceived me, she threw my own words in my teeth. 'Did you not say,' cried she, 'that it was not for my beauty that you loved me, and that I should always be dear to you, handsome or ugly, old or young, well or ill, rich or poor?'—'Yes,' said I; 'but I did not expect to find an invalid in a young woman of two and twenty.' Well, Sir, to be brief, this morning all the bills came pouring in; a thousand francs for the teeth, five hundred for the leg, two hundred for the wig, fifty for the eye, and other *items*, to the amount of three thousand francs altogether."

"I am sorry I can grant you no assistance," observed the Commissary. "You must apply to another tribunal."

"Stop a moment," cried the old man. "When I refused to pay the bills this morning, we had a quarrel, which lasted till breakfast made its appearance. So when an admirable dish of mutton chops was placed upon table, I thought I had better make the best of a bad job; and helping her to one of the largest and best looking chops in the dish, I told her to make herself happy, and we would not dispute any more. 'I'm not ready for my breakfast yet,' said she.—'Why not?' said I.—'Because I have no appetite,' said she.—'How is that, my dear love?' said I, very affectionately.—'Because I should like to give you a punch or two on the head first,' was her very disrespectful answer.—'What for?' said I.—'Only just to give me an appetite for my breakfast,' said she, very coolly; and jumping up, she pitched into me right and left. I really think she would not have left off yet, had not her cork-leg become untied, and down she plumped upon the floor: so I seized the opportunity and ran straight here."

"Does your wife drink?" demanded the Commissary.

"She is not averse to a drop," answered the old man.

"All I can do is to imprison her for the assault," said the magistrate.

"And then she would thrash me worse than ever when she came out of gaol," whimpered the old man, sneaking away from the office.

"Call the next case," said the Commissary.

A man was brought forward, in the custody of a town-serjeant, charged with having galloped his donkey through the streets, to the danger and discomfiture of all sober and honest citizens. The witness in this case was an English mechanic, whose evidence was delivered

through the *medium* of an interpreter. The defendant was in the habit of working in a brimstone loft, and as his hands were generally full of business, he had seldom time to wash either them or his face, so that he bore the appearance of having returned from that place where, according to good authority, the article upon which he worked abounds in the greatest quantity and perfection. The donkey, being accustomed to the same commodity, matched its master in complexion; and the speed with which they made their way amongst the mass of carriages and carts in the Faubourg Saint Honoré, added to the superstitious fears of the crowds that started aside as they sped along. The awful impression was rather increased than diminished, when upon being asked what was the rider's place of destination, he replied with the most perfect *nonchalance*, "To the devil, to be sure!"

The English witness described the extraordinary appearance of the two offenders, and the rapidity of their progress, which seemed to have been luckily impeded by a cart laden with hay, at which the donkey stopped to nibble, when the animal and its rider were both taken into custody by a town-serjeant.

"Was the man drunk?" inquired the Commissary of Police, through the *medium* of the interpreter.

The reply shall be given in the native English of the witness.

"About half-and-half," said that highly respectable man; "but they knowed vell enough vot they wos up to both on 'em; for the donkey vent up agin the wery hay he wos feedin' on, like an ungrateful beast as he wos."

The defendant protested that his donkey was the most harmless animal that ever lived, and that the speed at which he went could not have exceeded a pony's trot. Besides, he observed, that the poor little fellow made no disturbance in the streets, as he always went bare-footed.

"Aye, there it is," cried the English witness. "The Neddy goes on vithout makin' no noise in the vorld, so that he steals on you an' goes over you afore you knows vere you are, till you feels his guffs in your bowels. It is a dangerous hoccupation for to let sich hanimals go at large on the King's high-vay, vithout punishment by hact o' parliament."

"And how were they disposed of at last, officer?" demanded the magistrate.

"We took the defendant to the guard-house, *Monsieur*," was the town-serjeant's answer, "and the donkey followed us. We locked up his master in the *violon*, and gave the animal a knock with a stick to send him home. But he did not mind it;—on the contrary, he put his head inside the door of the outer guard-room, and made such a terrible he-hawing, that some of the mob who were passing at the time cried out, 'Oh! it's nothing but the patrol quarrelling!'"

"I really think that you might have permitted the defendant to go home with his donkey," observed the Commissary to the town-serjeant.

"And so we did, *Monsieur*," answered the police-agent. "But you shall hear the upshot of the whole matter. The corporal on guard advised me to let them be both together, and so I let in the donkey to keep company with his master in the *violon*. After a short period

had elapsed, just as I was going to have a stretch before the fire, the donkey gave another dismal yell; and I am certain his master was the instigator of it, more or less, for I heard them, as it were, conversing with each other. We could not bear this; and the corporal said to me, 'Open the door and let them out, for there is no such thing as tolerating this noise here.' I accordingly *did* open the door, and they walked out in the most friendly way together."

The Commissary addressed himself to the defendant, and directed him to make such arrangements with his donkey as would enable him to pass through the streets in future without disturbing the peace or terrifying people of weak nerves by his apparent association with a place not to be named to ears polite. The defendant declared that his donkey was the most amiable being in existence, and moreover asserted that the poor dumb animal divided with his wife the sincerest affections of his heart.

A boy was now brought up in the custody of a police-agent, charged with having sounded the depths of two or three gentlemen's pockets, in a most mysterious but highly practical and scientific manner.

"Even if I had my hands in a gentleman's pocket last night," said the boy, "the weather was so desperately cold, I am sure I was glad to put them anywhere."

"I know that boy to be a most incorrigible thief, *Monsieur*," said the town-serjeant.

"You say you know me!" cried the boy. "Now am I not like other boys? Is there any thing extraordinary about me?"

"I saw you try two or three pockets," answered the police-agent.

"Now mind what you say!" exclaimed the boy. "There is somebody here who knows that you are telling a story. I should be glad to ascertain what chance you will have in another world, if you tell lies in this of a poor innocent boy. Well—what did you see me do?"

"I saw you put your hands into the pockets of two or three gentlemen who were walking up the Boulevards," said the policeman.

"Have you any idea of another world?" demanded the boy.

"You see that you are well-known," said the Commissary.

"Known!" cried the boy. "Why—you would not believe what this man said of me, would you? I am sure I would not believe what he might say of you!"

"I turned him out of the Passage des Panoramas yesterday morning," said another town-serjeant. "He was looking in at a shop window, doubtless to ascertain if he could not steal something."

"Oh!" cried the boy: "I just went to look in at a shop window to ascertain if they wanted an errand-boy or not, and up comes this man with a cocked-hat, and away I walked. I may use my legs at any rate, I should suppose."

"Certainly," returned the Commissary. "But these officers seem to say that you have a very awkward way of using your hands."

"I assure you, *Monsieur*," returned the prisoner, "that I am a poor hard-working boy, and that I have had nothing to do for the last four years. I never put my hand in any one's pocket but my own."

"How came you with your hand in a gentleman's pocket last night, then?" asked the magistrate.

"Because he was a friend of mine to whom I had lent my Sunday coat," was the reply; "and as I met him in the street, I recollected that there were some important papers in the pocket. He was walking with a young girl, and so I did not like to disturb him; and as it was my own coat, I thought there was no harm in feeling in its pockets."

"If you be so good and industrious as you say," observed the Commissary, "why do you not send for your friend or friends to give you a character?"

"There's no use in it," answered the boy. "I have told these police-agents a dozen times where to go; but they will not do any thing without a bribe."

The town-sergean there stated that the prisoner had given them half-a-dozen wrong directions, and that no enquiry had been made after him at the Prefecture of Police. At the same moment another police-agent stepped forward, and declared that he knew the prisoner to be a common pick-pocket.

"Make room there!" cried the boy; "and let me have a good look at that man. Now, my worthy gentleman, take care of what you say. Are you sure that it is I whom you mean?"

"No doubt of it," returned the police-man, who had last spoken: "I myself conducted you to Bicêtre six months ago."

"You have got some shocking bad people about you, *Monsieur*," said the boy. "If ever I saw this individual before, I hope I may never go to heaven, that's all."

"Why, all the police know you," said the Commissary; "and if you go on in this way much longer, you will be sent to the galleys."

"Well," retorted the prisoner, "they may poke me about in this world, but I am very certain that some one will poke them about in another. They have all come forward to give evidence against me, and not one of them has told a word of truth."

"You must be sent before the Chambers of Correctional Police," said the Commissary: "I have heard enough to convince me that you are a very bad boy."

"Please you, *Monsieur*," cried the boy, "where do you hope to go when you have past the doctor? I'm sure there is not room in heaven for such as you."

"I am sorry to send so religious a young man to prison," said the magistrate; "but there is no help for it. Clerk, draw up the *procès-verbal*."

The document having been prepared, and the urchin having said his say, the next case was called, while the promising youth was led off to gaol.

One Mr. Benjamin Juddery, an English lace-weaver, was charged by his wife, a smart little woman, with having put her in great fear of her life. It appears that Mr. Benjamin Juddery had not always professed the business of lace-weaving; but that a few years previously, when he followed the highly genteel and profitable calling of dogs'-meat man, in the English metropolis, he had seduced the plaintiff into matrimony, by means of the following elegant epistle, the substance of which was communicated to the magistrate by the assistance of the English interpreter:—

"Dear Miss, Febiverry 14.

"Sure you and I has nowed one another now ever since the day as poor Lipey was hung; an' its oney jest an' right as I shed awail myself of this ear day (being Walentine's day) to sure you—i got a new barrer an' the dog as I ad I swopt for von a good dele biggerer—an' they tells me as how the rail rodes makes mete more cheaperer, my thorts is always on u, an' i often ses ven I'm a torken to Bill Smiff at the *Bell*. 'Bill,' ses I, 'if that ere voman ud oney make me a 'appy man, I'd leave off backer for a munff.'—'Oh!' ses he, 'I thinks a chap o' your billerties would be a chuckin' his-self avay.'—'Not a bit on it,' ses I, 'she's got a ed like a almernack an noes more than you thinks on, she could put you up to summut she could.'—'Never you mind,' ses he, 'if so be as you marries her, why you chucks yerself avay;' an' so I means to chuck myself slap into yer harms. an' i wenters to think as how you can't go for to wish to be up to chuckin' one avay agin. an' it aint no matter to nobody vhere I chucks myself. my dogs is rum uns to draw an' out an' out vons to bark. so kum to cherch, an' now no more from

"Your lovin' lovyer till death,

"BENJAMIN JUDDERY."

This pathetic epistle succeeded in securing the hand and heart of the young lady, and she shortly changed the harmonious appellation of Tippingworth for the euphonious *cognomen* of Juddery. She however led a miserable life; and the dogs'-meat business failing, she and her husband left London and repaired to Paris, where he entered the more elevated walks of lace-weaving. But she soon discovered that her husband had been in France before, and that he had another wife living; whereupon she separated from him, and he had made frequent attempts to obtain an interview with her, for the purpose of persuading her to renew their former intercourse. She however determined to have nothing more to say to him; and the consequence was that a few days previously she received the ensuing effusion:—

"Dear beller,

"my mind has bin in a compleat state of anx eye ity ever since you made a wow never to see me agin. as I can't have yer comperny as we used to have. i have been obligated 2 perwade the strete vere you live all day cos ven I nocks no von cums an' lets me in. i can't live vith any piece o' mind till I hear from yer sveet lipps as you von't have nothink to do more vith me. mi luv, I can't live vith Hout your sveet cumperny. I mite as vell be kicked out o' the walls o' the Creation. Mi luv, if you vill kum back an' enjoye wunce more vith your Hone Benjamin the sveets o' maytrimony—an' i will make you a cumfertable home—i will prommis you on the bible not to hide you any more—mi luv—i only hided you to make you the more fonderer on me. but as u objecth to sitch mezzhures i shall never undertake that transackshun no more. if u don't kum an' se me now u shall repent it cos i carry somethink allays about me.

"yer trew luv,

"B. J."

The Commissary enquired, through the interpreter, what Mr. Benjamin Juddery meant by threatening the life of a woman whom he had so grossly deceived? If he were in the habit of carrying something about him in order to do her a bodily and perhaps mortal injury, he, the magistrate, must do what he could to prevent his sanguinary purpose from being carried into effect.

The defendant, casting a look of the most piteous and expostulatory description at the object of his affection, who on her part seemed to be wholly unconscious herself of the tender passion, declared that the meaning of the expression complained of had been entirely misunderstood. He protested that he would sooner die than harbour a thought injurious to the person of his much-loved Arabella, and that all he meant was that he had procured some laudanum which he should be induced to swallow if she still remained insensible to his affection.

The Commissary settled the matter by desiring the interpreter to inform the prisoner that he must be handed over to the tender mercies of the King's Procurator and the Court of Assize, on a charge of bigamy; and when the wife implored the forbearance of the magistrate, she was acquainted with the fact that in France the ends of justice are invariably secured by the public prosecutor, whom no bribes can turn away from the straight path which impartiality and honour point out for him to pursue.

The last case, previous to that of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage, was then called: and this was it:—

An individual, who carried on the double callings of porter to a house and tailor to men's clothes, was found by the patrol, towards the "small hours," seated in a most peculiar condition in the middle of the Place Vendôme. It appears that he was strenuously advised by one of the patrol to retire to his couch, and that with a look of solemn earnestness he replied, "My dear fellow, nothing would please me more than to be in bed; but the truth is, the Place Vendôme is running round at this moment, and I am only waiting here till my own door passes."

The patrol very good-naturedly offered his services to transport the inebriate gentleman to his own dwelling if he would only inform him of the number; but the inebriate gentleman vouchsafed no other answer than by making faces in the face of the patrol, and when the patrol tried to pick the inebriate gentleman up, the inebriate gentleman knocked the patrol down.

The tailo-porter, or porto-tailor, whichever term the reader may choose to adopt, having but little to say in his defence, was fined in the sum of five francs to the King, and ordered to apologise to the individual whom he had so roughly handled.

The first, second, antepenultimate, penultimate, and last of the minor cases having been thus disposed of, the Commissary of Police retired for a few moments, to partake of a slight refection in an adjoining room; and on his return, Mademoiselle Anastasie was again summoned to his presence. Her old mother followed in the rear, and precipitated herself in a corner once more, where she fell into a chair and a violent fit of hysterics simultaneously.

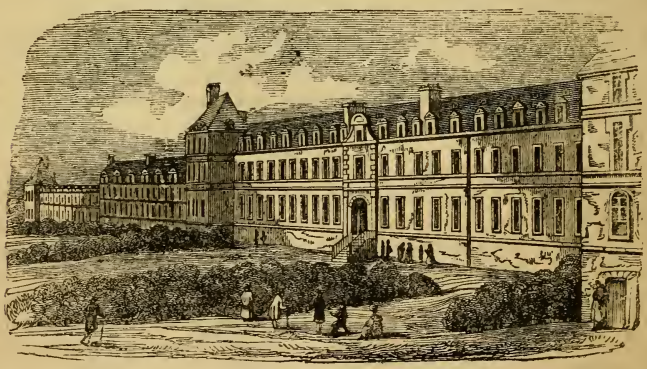
The Commissary of Police then entered into an examination of the

charges brought against the young lady, and the clerk drew up th *proces-verbal* thereof; but as the causes of Mademoiselle Anastasie's present dilemma will be duly narrated hereafter we must content ourselves with observing for the moment, that the document was forthwith despatched to the Judge of Instruction, and the fair delinquent to the prison of Bicêtre.

CHAPTER LXVI.

A VISIT TO MADEMOISELLE ANASTASIE IN AN UNCOMFORTABLE PLACE.—A CONVERSATION IN A PRISON.—CONVERSATIONS OUT OF A PRISON.

The edifice, which bears the name of Bicêtre, is situate on the road from Paris to Fontainbleau, about a mile and a quarter from the Barriere d' Italie. It derives its name from John, Bishop of Winchester, who built a fortified mansion on that spot in the year 1204, and whose real appellation has by gradient variations been transformed from Winchester into Bichestre, Bicestre, and lastly Bicêtre. In 1632 this edifice was changed by Louis XIII. into a hospital for military invalids; it is now used as a prison, a lunatic asylum, and a receptacle for the poor and needy. When viewed at a distance, it appears like an immense fortification; but on a closer inspection, it seems a



lofty work-house or asylum for the indigent, surrounded by a fosse. It is in this building, that criminals, under sentence of death, await the result of their appeal to the Court of Cassation.

It was also in the prison of that building, that a cell was provided for the reception of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage. The walls, which had once been whitewashed, were yellow and dirty with grease and smoke; and here and there were written in pencil, or scrawled with a piece of charcoal, a few lines indicative of the state of mind in which the former tenants of the chamber had found themselves at

different times. In one corner of the ceiling was a large cob-web, in which a fly was retained by an overgrown spider—a sad emblem of the fate of the degraded Anastasie. The wooden work round the fire-place had been perforated here and there with the point of a red-hot poker; and the poker itself was worn as thin as a skewer, by the number of times it had been heated in the fire,—for coals, not wood, were the fuel allowed in that prison. These trivial circumstances speak volumes concerning those who had inhabited the room before the present tenant of the miserable cell became acquainted with it. The mind, harassed by a thousand evils, and tormented by the anticipation of more, finds no amusement in books, and wiles away the time in the most childish pursuits. Hearts are broken in those walls,—aye, irrevocably robbed of peace, of happiness, and even of hope! The handsome cornices of the rooms covered with dust, are emblems of the hearts surrounded by the cobwebs of despair. Some may imagine,—but none can describe, the acuteness—the bitterness—the agony of the woe that is experienced in the dungeons of a felon's gaol!

The door of Anastasie's room was not locked, and it opened into a passage communicating with a court in which the female prisoners were allowed to walk. Of this indulgence she did not, however, avail herself at that moment; for she was sick at heart, and for the first time for some years she reflected that with her personal attractions, her natural abilities, the accomplishments which she really possessed, and her pleasing manners, she might have formed an eligible, or, at all events, a respectable connection, which might have saved her from ever becoming acquainted with the interior of a gaol!

In the midst of her sorrowful meditations an old woman, bent almost double with age and suffering, entered the room.

"Cheer up, my dear," said the hag: "with money one can make one's self as happy here as elsewhere."

"Why do you intrude upon me?" demanded Anastasie impatiently, for the old woman's voice was as harsh and grating upon the ear as the creaking of the prison-doors.

"I will wait upon you, if you will allow me," said the old woman. "The others would only rob and plunder you."

"My mother will be here presently," returned the young woman;—her mother had been in the prison called La Force, and Anastasie was well aware that she was acquainted with the usages of such places.

"Well, well," cried the old woman, moving sulkily towards the door; "I suppose you mean to wait upon yourselves. But I have been here these last ten years, and so if you do want a servant, give me the preference; for I assure you I am as honest as any one in the whole prison."

As she uttered these words, the old woman laid her right hand upon her heart, and reaching her left behind her, transferred Anastasie's purse very cleverly from the table to her own pocket. She then hastened out of the room, and concealed the plunder in a secure place, till the disturbance which the old crone expected would follow the discovery of the loss of the purse, should have subsided.

In the course of the afternoon, Anastasie's mother arrived with provisions. The excellent old lady had first made up her mind to terminate her cares in the Seine; but she at length hit upon the more

eligible and less fatal method of drowning them in the bottle—a system we strongly recommend to the consideration of all people who may be suicidically inclined. Having attended to the immediate comforts of her daughter, and implored her to be more circumspect in future, if she in any way escaped punishment on this occasion, the affectionate parent took a speedy departure, as she was then engaged in an affair with a Russian nobleman whom she had determined to ease of his ready money that same evening, with the aid of a dozen of her friends and confederates.

It was about half-past four o'clock, and Anastasie was just wondering what could have become of her purse, when the door of her apartment was thrown open, and three individuals slowly advanced towards her. The well-known features of Mr. Tupman first met her glance; behind him was the old gentleman in spectacles and black-gaiters whom she had seen at the Hotel du Rhin with Mr. Wegsworth Muffley; and last of all was an uncommon fat individual, with an exceeding red face, a capacious striped waistcoat, and tops and cords upon his legs.

The moment the cavalcade was thus revealed to the eyes of the fair delinquent, she had recourse to those articles which all females enlist in their service on such occasions,—viz., an Alpine-white pocket-handkerchief, a Niagarian fall of tears, and a Vesuvian eruption of sighs.

Mr. Tupman immediately seated himself beside the prisoner, and forgetting all his wrongs, hastened to console her to the utmost of his power: Mr. Pickwick commenced a fine speech, which the aspect of the miserable room effectually put a stop to in the midst of an oriental simile; and old Mr. Weller drew the cuff of his right sleeve across his eyes.

"Alas! alas!" cried Anastasie; "dis is vary kind of you gentlemans! De friends desert me—dem as I have wronged, dey come to me!"

"Young o'oman, young o'oman," exclaimed old Mr. Weller, in a voice which was much hoarser, because it was more impressive, than usual, "is them real tears, or is they halligator's tears?"

"Crocodile's, you mean," suggested Mr. Pickwick.

"Vell, crocodiles is like halligators, an' halligators is like crocodiles," returned Mr. Weller, senior; "or at all ewents they're so unkimmonly alike, that if you must be eaten up by von on 'em, I rayther think it vould'nt matter werry much vich on 'em it wos as dewoured you."

"Poor Anastasie!" murmured Mr. Tupman: "and is it come to this?" he added, as if there were any doubt to be entertained upon the matter.

"You see wot it is," continued Mr. Weller, the elder, moralizing; "ven a hoss is stubborn, an' obstinate, he frets his-self by his perwerse disposition into all kinds of unpleasantness, an' goes to the knackers a long vile afore his feller-creaturs."

"Can nothing save you?" demanded Mr. Tupman; "must you be tried—ignominiously tried?"

"I tell you wot it is, Sir," said Mr. Weller, senior, advancing towards Mr. Pickwick, and speaking in a most mysterious tone of voice; "you must send an' per-sent your wery respectful compliments to the

king, and tell his majesty that Miss Wolage here begs his pardon, an' kisses his feet, an' all them kinds o' gammon, an' she's sure to get off. The name of Pickvick vill penetrate to the wery heart o' the French king, an' get this young gal set free agin."

"I am afraid, my worthy friend," said Mr. Pickwick, "that you vastly over-rate the extent of my influence, and that even the king himself has not the power of arresting the course of justice."

"How many turnkeys is there here?" suddenly demanded old Mr. Weller after a long pause.

"Why?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Cos I'll tackle von on 'em, you'll knock down t' other, and Mr. Tupman can carry off the young gal on his back," was the answer, delivered amidst innumerable winks and nods.

"Justice must take its course, Mr. Weller," said Mr. Pickwick, solemnly.

"Ah! Sir," observed the old coachman, "so the unfort-nit man said ven they put him in the stocks an' pelted him vith heggs: but that ain't no consolation, that ain't, to them as suffers. But really Mr. Tupman does take on in sich a degree, that if I don't imbibe a drop o' somethin' short, or sing a song, or recapitilate some werses o' poetry, I shall whimper myself. Did you ever hear them lines as a feller made the night afore his execution, Sir? They're wery pretty."

"Never," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"Vell, these is 'em," rejoined the elder Mr. Weller; and while Mr. Tupman endeavoured to console Mademoiselle Anastaise de Volage, the old coachman repeated the following lines, in a species of sing-song tone of voice, which greatly edified Mr. Pickwick. We have, however, written the lines without reference to the pronunciation of the orator.

THE PRISONER'S CHANT.

'Twas within the prison's cheerless wall,
That the evening marked the pris'ners all,
Handsome or ugly, great and small,
In a room which served for festive hall,
From which you might hear the laughter fall,
That lightened their heavy hours of thrall;
And whenever one for a song did call,
In chorus the throng began to bawl.

Porter and pipes were their only fare,
Songs and jests were not wanting there,
And the witty jokes would make you aware
They were a company jovial and rare.
Liquor they never were known to spare,
For that could exterminate every care,
Better than sermon, better than prayer,
As all unanimous did declare.

Though some were likely, beyond a jok
To be doomed to die by an artichoke,*
And others be sent like frogs to croak
In a dreary cell where light never broke—
Still not a despairing word they spoke,
But continued to drink, to sing, and smoke,
Despising Fortune's heaviest stroke,
And laughing to lighten the weight of their yoke.

"Werry good, ain't it, as the fly said ven he tasted the treacle?" observed Mr. Weller, senior, so soon as the above effusion was terminated.

"Very peculiar style of versification," returned Mr. Pickwick.

"This poor creature," said Mr. Tupman, advancing towards his great leader, and speaking in a most lachrymose tone of voice, "this poor creature is desirous of making all the reparation to us which lies in her power, and she thinks she cannot better display her contrition than by——"

"Not by marryin' the guv'ner here?" interrupted old Mr. Weller, in alarm and trepidation.

"No—no," continued Mr. Tupman, impatiently, "but by placing in his hands a full confession of all her delinquencies—in a word, the history of her life!"

"You doesn't 'spose, Sir," said Mr. Weller, senior, "that if so be I bought a hoss an' foun' out as it worn't worth a copper-farden, that it ud be any consolation to me to know vere he got the glanders, how he come by the staggers, ven he broke his knees, on vich occasion he vent blind, an' vy he couldn't vork on the road no longer?"

"The metaphor is not appropriate," observed Mr. Pickwick, somewhat drily.

"Ve never met afore!" cried the old coachman, casting a look of mingled indignation and pity at Anatasie de Volage, who was wondering in her own mind whether the stout gentleman in the tops and cords was a Chinese or a Turk, as she could scarcely understand a single word he uttered.

"Simile, I meant," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Seemin'ly! vy do you say that ve must ha' met afore, seemin'ly?" cried old Weller.

My good fellow, you do not understand me," said Mr. Pickwick, mildly. "However, we will talk over this matter another time. You determined upon joining me and Mr. Tupman this afternoon to see a poor young woman in distress; and that feeling does honour to your heart. Tupman," continued the great man, addressing his friend: "tell the young person that I shall read her history with pleasure, and that I will do all I can to serve her."

Mr. Tupman delivered the message, and in order to do it with befitting delicacy, he placed his lips as near Anastasie's ear as possible, and much nearer indeed, than Mr. Pickwick thought to be by any means necessary.

At six o'clock the gaoler made his appearance, and requested the

* A hearty choke.

visitors to depart, as the gates of the passages communicating with the rooms of the prisoners were to be closed in a few minutes. Mr. Tupman bestowed a kind pressure upon the hand of Anastasie,—for woman, however deceptive, is fascinating still; Mr. Pickwick left his purse upon the table, and favoured her with a smile; and old Mr. Weller with a nod and a wink. The poor young woman was then left to her own reflections—the most unwelcome hosts to whose care she could possibly have been handed over for consolation or comfort—while Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman, in the inside, and Mr. Weller, senior, on the outside, of a hackney-coach, returned to the Rue Royale.

"Vell," said Mr. Weller, senior, to his son, when those two accomplished individuals were seated over a cold leg of mutton and a bottle of stout in Mr. Pickwick's kitchen,—"vell, Sammy, I never wos in a felon's prison afore, an' I hopes I shan't have for to wisit von agin. I ain't wery conwersant vith the hattributes o' them places, Samivel."

"Ain't you though?' demanded Mr. Weller, junior.

"No, I ain't, Sammy. I'm a coachman, or raythor I *wos* a coachman; an' ve dragsmen hears everything, you may say, but doesn't understand much: cos, jist ven a gen'leman as is sittin' along vith us on the box is in the middle o' his story, the off-leader shies, or a foot-passenger stops the coach to have a long shillin's vorth, or else ve comes to the public or the pike."

"Wery true," observed Sam: "you talks like the Greek grammar, you does, as the school-master said to his birch ven it vhistled in the air."

"There's a many things as never strikes people till they're told on 'em," cried Mr. Weller, senior; "or else wot ud be the use o' writin an' readin' books, an' all that kind o' thing?"

"Wot indeed!" exclaimed Sam.

"But as I wos a-sayin'," continued the old gentleman, "a coachman is necessarily a wery learned man, cos he hears all that is said about him; but he don't know nothin' thoroughly on account o' the interruptions. For instance, von gen'leman says, 'Them's oats,' as ve goes along the road.—'No, them's vheat, to be sure,' says another.—'It's rye,' says a third, says he.—'It's tares,' says a fourth.—Then jist ven the coachman is a-goin' to put his *weto* upon it all and set 'em right, he has to jump down, an' the conwersation is left unfinished."

"*Weto!*" cried Sam; "wot's that? an' how did you know it wos wheat, if so be you hadn't took any wery partickler notice o' the field as originated the conwersation?"

"A *weto*, Samivel," answered his father, assuming a most important air, "is a thing—a what d'ye call it—a sort of a—that is—a somethin' vich—you know wot, Sammy!"

And having thus lucidly expressed his meaning, the old gentleman helped himself to another slice of cold mutton, doubtless to reward his memory for this display of erudition.

In the mean time, a not less interesting conversation was in train in the parlour. There were several guests present—for Mr. Pickwick generally kept open house; and Mr. Wegwsorth Muffley had returned from England to stay twenty-four hours in the French metropolis, as

his publisher had ascertained that there would be scarcely enough manuscript for three good volumes by at least two chapters.

"Well, I am glad my Circassian lady is in a fair way of being punished at last," said Mr. Wegsworth Muffley.

"I am sure I am not," exclaimed Mr. Tupman.

"It was a part of her system to involve herself in difficulties," said Mr. Hook Walker.

"*Pauper res*—poor thing!" ejaculated Mr. Septimus Chitty. "She would have done much better to have cut her stick—*scindisse baculum*—from the country altogether."

"If she only gets herself out of this scrape, we might set her up in a sausage-shop," observed Mr. Kallaway. "There is nothing like the pork-line now-a-days."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! nothing," continued Mr. Kallaway. "When I killed that lovely hog of mine, which I have often spoken to you about, you know, I never felt my pride so gratified in all my life."

Mr. Pickwick thought that Mr. Kallaway was a very weak man, and that his pride was easily gratified.

"There is no sentiment—no poetry in that trade," said Mr. Snodgrass. "Let us make a shepherdess of her."

"No poetry!" exclaimed Mr. Kallaway, somewhat indignantly: "no poetry in hogs eating acorns, while you are looking at a sun-set over a style, and your wife is milking a dun cow by the ditch in the adjacent meadow? I say, Sir, that it is a beautiful sight!"

"So it is," coincided the philanthropic Mr. Pickwick; "particularly when the buxom young rustics are gathering blackberries in the meadows."

"No, no," cried Mr. Kallaway," "for whenever they did that, I always ducked them in the horse-pond."

This association of sun-sets, horse-ponds, ditches, hogs, and poetry, somewhat astounded Mr. Pickwick, and totally silenced the poetic Mr. Snodgrass, who contented himself with looking blank verse at the ex-farmer and grazier—a proceeding of which that gentleman however seemed to be quite unconscious.

"Talking of poetry," said Mr. Scuttle, "I believe it is nothing more than a vast stretch of the imagination; and therefore every absent man must be more or less a poet. Why—what do you think I did a few days ago?"

"I really do not know," returned Mr. Pickwick. "What?"

"I got into a passion with myself," rejoined Mr. Scuttle, "and actually bought a stick to lay across my own back. The worst of it was that I did not find out my mistake till I had thrashed my flesh black and blue, and was going to lay a complaint against myself before the Commissary of Police."

"Excellent!" cried Mr. Winkle. "That's one of your best, my dear Scuttle."

"Oh! I have seen some wonderful instances of absence of mind!" exclaimed Mr. Wegsworth Muffley: "but not in Paris, though."

"Where then?" demanded Mr. Scuttle.

"At the Old Bailey," answered Mr. Muffley.

"You are a very great traveller, I believe, Sir," said Mr. Scuttle.

"Very," replied Mr. Muffley. "I make it a rule to leave London on a little expedition at least every summer."

"Where to?" asked Mr. Scuttle. "To Paris?"

"No—to Greenwich," returned Mr. Muffley. "My uncle was also a great traveller. For seven years he went six hundred and twenty-six journeys every year."

"G— bless me," cried Mr. Pickwick. "How was that?"

"He lived at Paddington," was the answer, "and went every morning to the city, and returned every evening, in the omnibus, Sundays excepted."

"Ah! I see," said Mr. Pickwick, to whose capacious mind it occurred that there must be also a great many more illustrious travellers upon the same terms in London.

"All my family were celebrated, more or less," continued Mr. Muffley. "My eldest brother had his scull cut open when only nineteen."

"What! with a sword!" cried Mr. Winkle.

"No—with a pewter-pot," answered Mr. Muffley. "It was in a row in a cellar; and when the police came in, he paid them off, I can tell you."

"Thrashed them, I suppose," said Mr. Snodgrass.

"No—he ran away," rejoined Mr. Muffley. "Prudence was also a characteristic of our family."

"So I perceive," said Mr. Pickwick, drily.

"When my great grand-father became deeply involved in 29," continued Mr. Muffley, "what do you think he did?"

"Paid his creditors as much as he could in the pound," said Mr. Kallaway.

"No, he didn't—he went through the Insolvents' Court, and floored them all," cried Mr. Muffley."

"Was he in business," asked Mr. Pickwick.

"He was," replied Mr. Muffley.

"A merchant, I presume?"

"No—not exactly."

"What then?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"A tinker," answered Mr. Muffley.

In such edifying and amusing conversation as this was the evening passed away. In the course of a few days Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage forwarded a brief sketch of her adventurous life to Mr. Pickwick, for his own behoof and that of his friends. Accordingly, one evening, Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Winkle were seated in solemn conclave, and Mr. Snodgrass having kindly undertaken to perform the duties of secretary upon the occasion, the interesting narrative was read aloud, and its contents will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE HISTORY OF ANASTASIE DE VOLAGE.

ALPHONSE.—THE COUNT.—THE SAGE-FEMME'S HOUSE.—OTHER ADVENTURES, ARTIFICES, FRAUDS, AMOURS, TRICKS, AND VILLANIES.

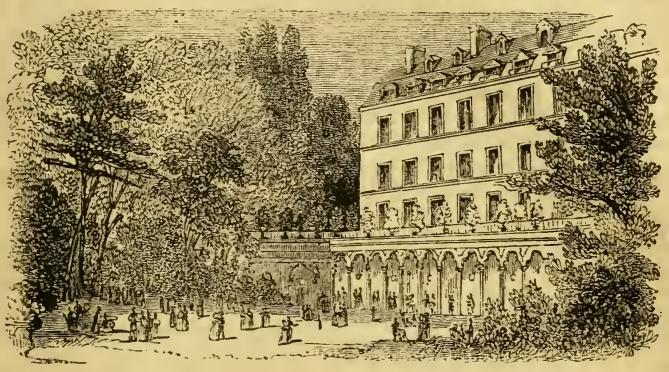
My father was a Field-Marshal, and my mother a *figurante* at the Academy of Music; and, like all the children of illicit love, I was doomed at an early age to experience the harsh treatment of the only parent who pretended to care for me, and to look upon the other as a species of deity whose fane I was not allowed to approach. During his life-time, the old Marshal allowed my mother ten thousand francs a-year, and doubtless intended to provide for her handsomely in his will; but he died suddenly, and her income ceased.

She was now obliged to return to the Opera, which she had relinquished upon her acquaintance with the Marshal; and as soon as I was twelve years old, I obtained an engagemement at the same establishment. At this period I was actually scarcely able to read: my education had been entirely neglected; or rather it had never been attended to at all; and the only accomplishments I possessed were dancing and singing. The conversation of my mother turned solely upon gowns, ribands, carriages, handsome young men, the delights of a Parisian existence, and the necessity of obtaining money by all the means that lay in her power. In such a school I was not likely to acquire any very exalted ideas of virtue; and I speedily imbibed the same taste for pleasure which was so strongly recommended by my mother.

As I grew up, my mother became more kind in her manner towards me. While I was a child, I was perpetually in her way: but as I became a woman, she probably saw in the attractions of my person a regeneration of that source of emolument to which she had lately been compelled to say adieu!

I was about fourteen years of age, when I became acquainted with a young gentleman, of modest fortune, small expectations, but of fascinating manners and good personal appearance. He was a clerk in a government office; and being acquainted with the director of the great Opera, was frequently admitted behind the scenes. There we met for the first time—and there we exchanged glances which reciprocally betrayed the favourable impressions we had formed in each other's favour. Alphonse Germilly was only two and twenty—I was fourteen—and we soon loved as tenderly, as sincerely, and as purely as it was possible to love. I invented a thousand excuses from day to day to absent myself from home and indulge in stolen interviews with Alphonse: and he, though much older than I, was boyish and childish in

his passion. We bestowed innocent caresses upon each other—we walked in the secluded avenues of the Champs Elysées—we idled away hours on the terrace of the Feuillants—and in the evening, when I was not compelled to be at the Opera, we sate beneath the trees opposite the Café Turc, and did not suffer the ices or the sorbets with which we regaled ourselves to cool the ardour of our passion. Oh! many a



happy hour have we passed in that spot—alone together amidst all the bustle, the gaiety, the noise, and the crowd that surrounded us—alone, beneath the tall green trees, the foliage of which rustled with the refreshing breeze—alone near that spot where in after years the deluded Fieschi directed his deadly artillery against the life of the Citizen King!

Every moment that Alphonse could spare from the duties of his situation, or that I could steal from the frivolous occupations which my mother entailed upon me in respect to her wardrobe, was passed in each other's society; and often did the young man urge me to leave the stage, accept of his hand, and content myself with the humble fortune he nobly offered to lay at my feet. But I hesitated—hesitated from day to day—hesitated between the reality of bliss and a chimera of a more exalted felicity which haunted my imagination. The pernicious counsels of my mother had led me to believe that my charms ought to captivate a man of wealth and title; and that I should never think of throwing myself away upon those whom foolish people (to use her own words) miscalled my equals.

I was one evening anxiously waiting for my mother to take her departure to the Opera, as I had promised Alphonse to meet him as usual in the vicinity of the Café Turc, when to my temporary disappointment she stated that her services for that evening were dispensed with, and that she expected a few friends to supper.

"They are all gentlemen, my dear Anastasie," said she; "and one is a Count immensely rich—very handsome—very generous—and very liberal to the objects of his affection."

"I had rather not be present at this party, my dear mother," said I, tremblingly.

"And I had much rather that you should," was her answer, de-

livered in a tone which shewed that all remonstrance would be useless. I sighed as I thought of the disappointment that would be experienced by poor Alphonse; but just at that moment a milliner arrived with two splendid new dresses, one for myself, and the other for my mother,—and I forgot Alphonse as I contemplated the garb that was destined for me.

At eleven o'clock the guests arrived. The Count was a tall handsome young man, with a dissipated and languid look, but with eyes that seemed to fascinate those he gazed upon. His conversation was sparkling and witty; and there was about him a certain *je ne sais quoi*, which I had never seen characterise any other individual, and which did not fail to charm while it bewildered me. The more homely manners and less noble appearance of Alphonse Germilly, were eclipsed by the brilliant Count de Franconville.

"My box at the Italian Opera is at your service, *Mademoiselle*," said the Count to me in the course of the evening; "and I shall not fail to call for you and Madame de Volage to-morrow night."

At that moment I remembered Alphonse, and was about to refuse the proffered honour, when my mother anticipated me by accepting it with many thanks.

I can give no further details concerning that unfortunate party,—unfortunate, because it threw me in the way of one who dazzled my imagination, bewildered my senses, and inflamed my soul with his conversation and his glances! Suffice it to say, that when he and his friend had departed, I could not help wishing that they had staid a little longer; and upon the following evening, when my mother and I returned from the Italian Opera, I regretted within myself that Alphonse did not resemble the Count de Franconville.

"And yet," thought I, "I do not love this great nobleman: his wealth and lofty position astound, as much as his conversation attracts, or his glances intimidate me! No—I love Alphonse—and never will I be unfaithful to him!"

I hastily dispatched a note to my lover, to assure him that indisposition alone had prevented me from meeting him as usual; and his reply was couched in the most endearing and affectionate terms. Five minutes after I had received his note, the Count called, and for a few hours I again forgot Alphonse Germilly.

Some months passed away, and my existence was composed of a strange medley of hours of excitement, depression, and of doubt. I enjoyed a calm and tranquil felicity in the society of Alphonse,—with the Count I was happy, but in a different way,—and when alone, I was tormented with a thousand conflicting passions and feelings.

But this autobiography is rather intended to be a narrative of events than a detail of thoughts and reflections. Without waiting to notice all the wiles and artifices that were practised, both by my mother and the Count to decoy me from the path of virtue,—without stopping to account for the concession which I made to the schemes of duplicity on the one side, instead of to the whisperings of tender affection on the other,—and without breaking the thread of my narrative to show how step by step, I advanced towards that abyss which eventually swallowed me up,—let me at once tell the sad tale, and confess that I became the victim of the man of dissipation and pleasure,—I who

would not join my hand with that of the honourable but more humble individual who would have made me his wife!

For six months did I receive the visits of the Count de Franconville —and for six months did my mother exist in splendour upon the wages of her daughter's shame. I still continued to see Alphonse in private, from time to time; but he knew not my degraded condition. I required the conversation of a good and virtuous being—I wanted a friend—and his society was the consolation that I sought. At length the Count very unceremoniously withdrew his protection; my mother again returned to the stage; and I was once more at liberty to see my still beloved and loving Alphonse, as before.

He pressed me to accept his hand, and make him happy; and I was more than ever inclined to abandon the ambitious views which my mother had encouraged me to entertain, and retire at once into a happy but a humble sphere of life. And yet how could I deceive an excellent and kind-hearted young man? Days and weeks passed away, and still I hesitated what step to take. At length a circumstance occurred which put an end to my doubts and deliberations. I found that I was in a way to become a mother, and that I could not longer conceal the results of my amour with the Count de Franconville from the world!

"You have frequently pressed me, Alphonse," said I, one evening to Germilly, as we were seated opposite the Café Turc together,—"you have frequently pressed me to become your wife, and I hitherto have as often refused. Mention not the subject again—believe me, I love you—and if at the expiration of a year you entertain the same sentiments as you do at this moment, I promise you that I will place no impediment in the way of our union."

"And wherefore this delay, Anastasie?" exclaimed Alphonse: "why procrastinate the happy moment?"

"A relation, whom I sincerely love—an aunt—whom you have never seen—is now at the point of death! She lives far from Paris—oh! very far—in one of the distant provinces; and I must repair to the place of her residence to be near and with her. Should she succumb to the force of her malady, the period I have indicated must elapse before we can be happy; and should she recover, I have promised to pass a few months in her society."

"Be it as you say, Anastasie," returned Germilly; "only, during your absence, let me not be left in anxiety and suspense concerning your health and welfare."

"I will write to you constantly," was my answer: and we then bade each other farewell. In a few days I left Paris, and lived for some time in a secluded manner in the neighbourhood of Saint Germain-en-laye.

At length the time approached when I was to become a mot er. You, for whom this narrative is penned, may not be aware that there are houses in Paris, kept by women called *sages femmes*, in which the frail one may conceal her shame, and usher into the world that offspring which elsewhere would be the proclamation of her disgrace. Houses of mystery and silence are those asylums—useful to the scion of the noble family, as well as to the member of the poorer classes—and endowed with every comfort which the most fastidious lady could require, as well as every requisite to ensure the maintenance of that

secresy which the *sage femme* was never known to betray. Alas! to what a tax has not the ingenuity of man from time to time been put, in order to discover means, not so much to prevent crimes, as to veil their consequences; and sad is the conviction for the contemplation of posterity, that as civilization and social improvement progress in reference to laws, luxuries, and the inventions of art and science, so does the average amount of turpitude increase in proportion!

In the silence and darkness of a cold winter's night, I left my peaceful retreat in the neigbourhood of Saint Germain-en-laye, and repaired in a hired vehicle to the private asylum which my mother had selected as a safe retreat wherein her daughter could bring forth and conceal the fruits of her frailty. I shall pass over all trivial circumstances connected with that event: suffice it to say, that the child, which might have published my shame, survived not its birth, and that I did not regret its speedy removal to the tomb.

The only acquaintance that I formed in the house of the *sage-femme* was that of a young woman who had also suffered herself to be betrayed by the seductive language of a villain. But she was far more virtuous than I;—she mourned her crime with tears, with sighs, and with anguish,—and she had fondly loved the wretch who had broken her too susceptible heart. Her cousin, she informed me, had vainly sought her seducer, in order to take ample vengeance upon the head of him who had wronged his relative; and he occasionally visited her to soothe her sufferings and hold out prospects of happiness in future. We did not reveal our names to each other; but we were intimate, and a casual acquaintance soon ripened into a strict friendship.

The room of this young person was situate at one end of a passage, and mine at the other; and we were the only tenants of any apartments whose doors opened into that corridor, which communicated with the rest of the house by means of a flight of stairs in the middle. Whenever her cousin called upon her, he invariably advertised her of his visit through the medium of the *sage-femme*, before he ventured up stairs, fearful that any other inmate of the house might be with his relative. But one morning he called; and not finding the *sage-femme* in her own room as usual, he ascended the stairs, without giving notice of his presence in the house—advanced up the passage—and was about to knock at the door of his cousin's room, when I issued from my own apartment. Judge of my surprise—my agony—and my despair, when I found myself face to face with Alphonse Germilly!

"What do I see?" cried the young man: "is it possible? you—Anastasie—you here!" and in a moment the whole truth flashed to his mind. "Oh! now I comprehend the motives of your pretented visit to your aunt, who lives far—very far off—and the delay which you requested, ere you gave me a decided answer!"

"Alphonse! Alphonse!" cried I: "spare your reproaches; I cannot bear them!"

"Oh! this is the lover of whom you have so often spoken to me," cried the object of Alphonse's visit, now rushing from her own apartment to ascertain the cause of the disturbance in the passage, and addressing herself to me; "and you Alphonse—you have found the mistress you adored!"

"True—too true!" murmurred Germilly, passing his hand across his

brow; then, all manly feelings giving way to the tide of grief and disappointment, he wept bitterly.

"For God's sake calm yourself!" cried I, overcome with shame and sorrow.

"Your seducer! your seducer, Anastasie—who is he? speak!" cried Alphonse, after a long pause: "speak, I say—and may my search for him not be in vain as it was for the one who ruined my cousin!"

I was about to utter the fatal name; when a foot-step, ascending the stairs, fell upon my ears, and I hesitated for a moment. It will be necessary here to observe that my mother had encountered the profligate nobleman, who had caused my ruin, the evening before this memorable day, at the Opera, and had related all that had befallen me. The Count had inquired the address of the house in which I resided; and at that moment—as I stood in the passage, with my former lover on one side, and my new friend on the other—the step that I heard was the step of de Franconville—and in another instant he was before us.

"This is my seducer!" cried I in a firm tone of voice, addressing myself to Alphonse.

A horrible scream echoed through the passage, and a faint voice exclaimed, "And that is the villain who also robbed me of peace and tranquillity for ever!" It was Alphonse's cousin, who, pale and ghastly, leaning against the wall, and pointing towards de Franconville, had spoken these words.

"Wretch!" cried Alphonse, springing forward, and catching the young nobleman by the throat; "two victims; ah! that is too much! But the deeper is the debt you have to pay to liquidate the claims of vengeance!"

"One champion for two ladies!" exclaimed the Count, scornfully: "Taunts shall not serve as subterfuges!" cried Alphonse. "Here—here—in the very house, to which your villany has driven these women—shall you afford me the means of avenging their wrongs."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the Count. "Well! it is very possible that I may gratify you. Let me see!" he continued, raising an elegant little watch from his waistcoat pocket, and negligently dropping it back again, "it is now close upon three o'clock! Just the hour that I promised to meet the Marquis de Vaërmille at the shooting-gallery. Happy idea! a little practice may not be amiss—especially as I have twenty thousand francs upon the match. So, if pistols be your weapons, here are mine. Choose the one you like the better! They are both charged! It is very lucky that I had an engagement this morning at the shooting-gallery, or I should not have had these pretty weapons with me!"

"I accept your offer!" cried Alphonse, not a little astonished at the coolness with which his antagonist spoke; then looking sternly towards us, he exclaimed, "and you whose respective causes I shall now avenge with one blow, dare not, by word or action, to interfere with the dispensation of Providence!"

My female companion sank senseless upon the floor of the passage, and I watched the proceedings of the two foes with speechless horror.

"If I die," said the Count, as he retreated to the end of the passage, "I must be buried in Pere Lachaise. It would not be aristocratic to lie elsewhere. I hope, however, that I shall be spared to see the

shooting match to day, and to taste those truffles which Beauvilliers procured for me and the Marquis a few days ago."

"Are you ready?" demanded Alphonse.

"I await your pleasure," returned the Count, with a bow and a smile as polite and calm as if he were acknowledging a civility or a favour.

"We will fire together," said Alphonse, pointing to a clock which stood in the middle of the passage, facing the stair-case, "the moment the bell of that clock shall have struck the third stroke of the next hour, which is three!"

"Anything to afford you pleasure," answered the Count. "We have nearly a half a minute yet to wait."

"About," observed Germilly.

"The weather is particularly cold to-day," said the Count. "If I survive this encounter, I shall immediately proceed to the next café, and take a glass of hot punch; and if I do not I would really advise you to do so."

At this moment the clock struck once—then twice—then thrice—and both pistols were fired at the same instant. Alphonse started—leapt up in the air—and fell heavily upon the ground. Not a murmur escaped his lips.

"Well," exclaimed the Count, walking leisurely up to the body, and satisfying himself that Germilly was no more, "I was afraid that this would be the result. You see that when I hold the pistol in this position, I cannot help hitting my man; in fact, I never fail. Good morning, ladies; I must not keep the Marquis waiting any longer! I will just step across the way and take a glass of punch, and can then let the Commissary of Police know what has happened. Adieu, my dears!"

And with these words, the Count turned upon his heel, strolled leisurely down stairs, desired the *sage-femme* and the servants whom he met, not to hurry themselves, as it was all over, and left the house humming an opera air.

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My mother and myself visited England, as soon as I was convalescent; and I am ashamed to be compelled to confess that we turned the credulity of the English to excellent account. With all his pride and love of his country, John Bull is dazzled by anything which he can introduce to his friends "as a foreign importation;" and every thing that is French, save cutlery and cottons, is sure to succeed in the land of our British neighbours.

On our return to Paris, we hired apartments in one of the most fashionable streets, and practised the same game upon the English abroad, which we had so successfully played upon them at home. One evening I met a young English gentleman at the Opera, and we speedily became acquainted. The conversation soon became animated, and I fancied that I had already secured another dupe in my toils and meshes.

"Do you intend to make a long stay in Paris?" said I; "because if you do, the Countess, my mother, will be most delighted to see you."

"I hope to have the honour *de possdeèr Monsieur* at my *soirées*,' said my mother.

"Why, the truth is," answered the young gentleman, "I am performing the grand tour, and instead of confining it to Europe, as many of my fellow countrymen have done, I purpose to take Calcutta in my way, and come home by Canton; so that I shall see Asia as well as Europe, and thus kill two birds with one stone. I have obtained letters of introduction to the Great Cham of Tartary, who is an intimate friend of my father's—and shall pass the winter with him. He has promised me the use of his stud of elephants—and that, you know, is a considerable attraction."

"The young man is not right in his head," whispered my mother to me—an opinion in which I coincided.

"I am sick of horses," continued the English gentleman, "and long to have an opportunity of leaping over a five-barred gate upon the back of an agile elephant."

"Shall we have the pleasure of your company to-morrow evening?" enquired my mother, with a smile.

"Certainly," answered the young stranger. "I am a famous fellow for parties! How do you think I disposed of last night? Dined at the Ambassador's at six—went to tea with an old lady, who has left me all her fortune in her will, at half-past seven—hurried home, and wrote forty-six letters on business to the Pope, by nine—went to an evening party, and danced seven quadrilles and two waltzes, by ten—returned home, made the porter drunk, and kicked him down stairs as the clock struck eleven—proceeded to Frescati's, and lost forty thousand francs in five minutes and seventeen seconds by a stop-watch—sate down to supper at twelve with Lord Bolthead and the Marquis of Thingmigig—went to a ball at Lady Walford Waddleton's—ate a second supper there at half-past one—thrashed the patrol as I left the house—joined a small and select party of fourteen young gentlemen over a bowl of punch—ate anchovy toast and drank Madeira at three—reeled home at four—went to bed—got up again at five—fought a duel at six—rode a race for a cool thousand at seven, and breakfasted at the Café de Paris at nine."

"He is one of those vaunting, boasting, ignorant Englishmen," said my mother to me, "whose delight is to thrash a hackney-coachman, drink porter with sweeps, and break their necks on thorough-bred horses. Ten to one he is a Captain."

"A Captain," said I in a whisper, "and what makes you think so?"

"Because all broken-down Englishmen are Captains," was the answer; "and those who have never smelt powder, are sure to be the first to assume that rank. If a man be only a clerk in a banking-house, the moment he leaves, he assumes the rank of a Captain: indeed, when an individual of that description is ruined or turned away for robbing the till, he has only two alternatives—either to sweep a crossing, or to dub himself a Captain. As he has not talent enough for the former, he usually does the latter, and adds the bully to the cheat."

"But I really think that this is an honest young man," said I.

"We can but try him," responded my mother.

In the meantime the stranger was talking as rapidly as if he were not compelled to wait for ideas like other men.

"Very pleasant, this," said he, "but rather dangerous to get amongst the crowd outside. I invariably carry a thousand pounds or so in my pocket, and cannot say I admire a crowd. In fact, when I'm in London, I generally fill my coat-pockets with loose money, so that the thieves get that, and leave my breeches and waistcoat alone. A friend of mine has just realized half a million by his patent finger trap: it is the death-blow of all pickpockets; and I understand that those gentry are going to petition parliament against an innovation which threatens to ruin their profession."

"You seem to have observed a great deal in your life," said I to the young gentleman.

"Of course I have," was the answer, "I have been in half the debtors' prisons in England—that is, as an amateur—and had a very narrow escape some months since of figuring at the stepper."

"The stepper! what is that?" inquired my mother.

"The mill, my dear Lady," was the reply,—"a pleasant little gentlemanly exercise, undertaken by patriotic persons at Brixton or Tothill Fields, for the good of their country."

By this time the Opera was concluded, and the young gentleman, having in vain sought for his own carriage, and wondered how his servants could be so remiss as not to have brought it, handed us into a hackney-coach, and ordered the driver to conduct us to the Café Anglais close by, where he insisted upon treating us to a supper. When the vehicle stopped, the stranger had no loose money; but he pulled out a purse filled with bank-notes, and I immediately liquidated the driver's demands.

We partook of the most sumptuous repast that the house could afford —the Champagne flowed in abundance—a pine-apple was ordered— and we became as intimate as possible.

"I must insist upon changing rings with you," said the English gentleman, playfully: "this ring of mine was given to my father by Count Wrobemorl, a German nobleman; I know that it cost thirty thousand francs in ready money;"—and with these words, he slipped his ring on my finger, and substituted in its place one which originally cost me nothing, my affectionate mother having one evening found it on the hand of a drunken gentleman, who never returned to claim it.

"You are really too good," said I, imagining that I had ensnared the finest dupe I had ever yet encountered.

"Not at all," returned he. "But what do they mean by giving us wine like this? Waiter! No one answers! I will soon see whether we cannot have the prime sort—I, who patronise this house always and never spend less than a couple of hundred francs a-day! It is really too bad to be treated in this manner!"

With these words the young gentleman rose in great indignation, and left the room, assuring us that he should return in a few minutes.

"We shall pluck him finely!" said my mother to me with a chuckle.

"What a beautiful ring this is that he has given me!" I remarked: "how the diamonds glitter!"

"He is as innocent as a lamb," continued my mother.

"And has plenty of money too," added I.

At this moment the landlord entered, and presented his bill, the hour being very far advanced. We waited for some time to see if our friend did not return; but no one made his appearance—the landlord grew impatient—and at length my mother and myself were compelled to settle the account as well as we could.

On the following morning I rose early, and attired myself in the most simple apparel I possessed. The adventure of the previous evening was for the moment forgotten—the approaching marriage of the Count de Franconville, of which I had heard a few days before, occupied all my attention. The religious portion of the ceremony was to be performed at the Cathedral of Notre Dame, and something prompted me to witness the bridal. A species of vague curiosity impelled me to behold the countenance of the lady of his choice.

I proceeded to the Quai des Orfevres, and did not wait long before the brilliant *cortége* of rank and fashion made its appearance. I suffered it to pass by me, and then followed it at a little distance, resolving to gratify my curiosity in the Cathedral, at the foot of the altar

The procession passed on—and at length it reached the Morgue. A great many people were running in and out of that receptacle of death; and, urged by God only knows what feeling at the moment, I entered the dismal tenement of unclaimed corses in company with other idlers who stepped aside, with the coolness of an every-day occupation, from the nuptial train to view the asylum of the dead.

One body only was stretched upon a bench in the Morgue—and the moment I cast my eyes upon the features of that inanimate form, livid and swollen as they were, I recognized the lineaments of a lovely face which was too deeply imprinted in my memory to be ever forgotten. One loud scream issued from my lips, and I rushed almost frantically from the Morgue.

Wildly did I run along the narrow street which leads to the Place de Parvis; and I arrived at the magnificent old gate of the ancient Cathedral just as the bridegroom was handing a lovely young lady from the carriage.

"Stop!" cried I, almost unconscious of what I did: "Count de Franconville, thou will not surely commemorate thy bridal with one; while another who has loved thee lies a corpse at a little distance!"

"Ah! is it you, Anastasie?" said the nobleman, very coolly: "I am glad to see you. Make my compliments to your excellent old mother and take this to remember the twenty-first of September—my marriage-day!" he added, handing me his purse, which I rejected.

"Villain!" exclaimed I: "the poor girl, whose cousin you slew in a duel, and whom you robbed of honour and happiness for ever, lies at this moment a corpse in the Morgue. I am another of your victims—me have you also deprived of that which woman cannot too highly value!"

I do not hesitate to confess that revenge alone prompted me thus to address the gallant nobleman: regret for the past, in reference to myself, I certainly did not *then* feel.

At this moment the father of the bride interfered.

"When did you leave the lunatic asylum, my dear?" coolly de-

manded the Count; then turning to his father-in-law, he said, "She is a poor girl who committed a robbery in my hotel some years ago, and ran away with the footman. But I found out that she was mad, and sent her to a private asylum in the Champs Elysées, where she has conducted herself in anything but a creditable manner. Indeed, at this moment, there are warrants out against her for child-murder."

As these infamous falsehoods fell upon my ear, I felt my brain whirl, and all powers of utterance leave me. I staggered and fell—and just before I sank into a state of insensibility on the pavement, I heard the wretch observe—"There, you see she is intoxicated, even at this early hour."

When I recovered, I found myself in a neighbouring café; but the marriage had been celebrated, and the cavalcade had returned to the princely hotel of the Count de Franconville. That same evening—while the gilded saloons of that nobleman's residence were echoing to the sounds of music and dancing—the corpse of the young girl, whom I had met in the house of the *sage-femme*, was conveyed to the tomb! She had ended her days of misery by precipitating herself into the river, doubtless when the rumour of her seducer's intended marriage met her ears. The following lines were found in her bosom on a paper, which the wet had scarcely damaged; and as the circumstances by which such an effusion came into my possession are singular, I here re-produce that sad effusion of a broken spirit.

LINES.

If the joys of my life for ever must perish,
And hopes that I cling to so fondly, decay,
Oh! why should my bosom thus stedfastly cherish
The visions that please me and vanish away?

Why nourish an adder to sting me reposing?
Why grasp at a straw on the edge of the stream?
Why hope, when the lustre of day-light is closing,
To catch from the western horizon its beam?

Alas! the green tree cannot flourish for ever,
The elegant rose is not always in bloom;
They fade, and they wither—their leaves the blasts sever,
And mortals, like them, must be call'd to the tomb!

Oh! then let me die without vainly inclining
To hopes that my fortune will ever betray;—
Our days are a series of constant repining
When pass'd in the search of those flowers that decay.

But the efficacious lessons and good impressions which such adventures ought to have produced for my benefit, were soon effaced by the vicious counsels of my mother, and by the pursuits of that society which I daily met with at home or at the residences of others. Our only employments were how to entrap victims; and the manner in which Mr. Tupman was robbed by me and my confederates the first time we ever met, may be taken as a sample of our proceedings.

One day I was walking along the Boulevard Montmartre, when I met an individual whom I thought I knew. I could not be mistaken—it was my English adventurer, who was going to ride elephants in Tartary, but who had left me to pay for his supper. I accosted him; and he did not attempt to elude me.

"Upon my word," said he, "that was a fine piece of fun! The biter bit! But never mind—I am in the possession of funds now, thanks to my old father who has just paid me out of prison, and I will do the thing that is right. This time I have not got play-bills in my purse instead of bank notes."

"I need not tell you" said I, "that your ring was only gilt, and not worth two francs."

"Just as if I did not know that, my dear girl!" cried the young gentleman, laughing heartily. "But here is a five-hundred-franc note for you, and to-night I am going to St. Omers. You shall accompany me. Be at the *Messageries Generales* this evening at five, and we will go together. Is it a bargain?"

"It is," said I; for my mother was in a prison, and I was sick for the moment of Paris life.

"Well then," returned he, "my name is Crashem—Adolphus Crashem—that is for the present—and I am nephew to the king of the North Pole, where there is no day. Adieu, till five!"

It is not necessary to say that the appointment was kept, and that Mr. Tupman accompanied us to St. Omers, whence he was fetched back by his friend Mr. Pickwick.

The life of the female adventurer is indeed one of excitement. To-day, rich, courted, and happy,—to-morrow, poor, shunned, and trembling upon the verge of suicide. The balloon soaring proudly in the air—and the ship, sinking into the abyss of the deep, are fit emblems of the species of existence led by individuals who, according to the usual term, "live upon their wits." The first thing in the morning, the duns are at the door; and the last thing which is left at the porter's lodge at night is a writ of summons or a notice of judgment. Tradesmen are obsequious at first, and impertinent afterwards: the servants, who thrive upon the fruits of the prosperous days of the female adventurer, become the masters in the hours of adversity. To-day the adventurer lounges in a gilded saloon, with costly furniture, flowers, silks, carpets, and jewellery around and about: to-morrow she dwells in a garret, with a piece of a broken mirror on the mantel, a party-coloured counterpane on the bed, and a herring on a broken plate in the cupboard;—now drinking the sparkling juices of Epernay from chrystal cups—and in another week, fetching the pure spring-water from an adjacent pump in a yellow jug without a handle. At one moment the adventurer sees her wardrobe filled with costly things,—silks and satins lying about in all directions,—a gold watch thrown like an useless thing upon a table amongst a variety of curiosities and valuables,—and a new gown for each successive day: in a short time how changed is the scene! The old stuff gown alone remains,—the warm bed is left at an early hour to iron out the only cap snatched from the general wreck,—and two or three flights of stairs must be descended to ascertain the hour at a

neighbour's clock! In the day of prosperity, the last new novel is sent, immediately it is out, from the bookseller's, and remains scarcely cut upon a side table, amidst albums, shells, work-boxes, music, pictures, China monsters, and all kinds of nick-nacks: in the time of adversity the old journal, that wraps up the quarter of a pound of butter, which the adventurer fetches for her breakfast, is read and re-read a thousand times. The female adventurer knows a hundred more vicissitudes and changes than the adventurer of the opposite sex: because the latter is absolutely dependent on his own wits only, whereas the former chiefly relies upon the sagacity and cunning of others. Such, in a few words, is the life of the adventurer.

One evening as I was walking alone in the passage Colbert, waiting for a female friend who had appointed that place as a *rendez-vous*, I met the Count de Franconville.

"Ah, Anastasie!" said he, switching a horse-whip—(his groom was waiting with his thorough-bred in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs),—"I have to ask your pardon for my conduct on my wedding day: but, really you were too bad. Had you introduced yourself as my cousin, or as my housekeeper's daughter, I should not have cared!"

"And Madame de Franconville?" said I.

"Listen, my dear Anastasie," was his answer; and for some time he laughed so heartily, he could not continue his speech;—"listen! I made the very best of husbands—dined at home every Thursday, because on that day we received company, and took my wife every three months to Versailles, because at those periods she received her income. Well—what do you think the traitress has done?"

"I really do not know," said I. "Perhaps she declares that you have ceased to love her."

"Oh! no—no! not quite so bad as that, Anastasie," replied the Count, "for *that* I never could have forgiven. Guess again!"

"Appropriated her money to her own use," was my suggestion.

"No—nor yet half so bad as that. Guess once more," cried M. de Franconville.

"Well—run in debt," said I.

"Neither!" exclaimed the Count. "She has not run in debt, but she has run away with the colonel of the —th hussars."

"Impossible!" cried I. "Madame de Franconville—that young lady—so beautiful—so chaste—so innocent—and so unaffected!"

"Perfectly true," said the Count coolly; "and I am very glad of it, as a volatile friend of mine declares whenever any accident befals him. She has written a penitent letter—no one knows anything about it in the fashionable world—and so, when she comes back, she cannot utter a word against my own follies. But I must leave you now, for my horse is waiting, and I have an affair of honour by torch-light at eight o'clock. You see that I have not much time to spare—especially as before I go, I have to order supper at Grillon's for myself, my antagonist, the doctor, and the seconds, at eleven precisely. It will be an excellent supper, and it would therefore be a great pity if either of us were killed, as in that case he would lose the entertainment."

"Adieu!" said I; and having received a handsome ring, which the Count drew from his finger and presented to me, I parted with one whose disposition was naturally good, although dissipation and the vicious usages of a corrupt society had changed or disfigured many noble attributes of his soul.

Scarcely had I parted with the Count, when I was accosted by a lady, elegantly dressed. She questioned me—somewhat rudely and imperiously, as I at first thought—relative to the particulars of my conversation with the young nobleman. The lady was past the middle age; and in a few moments I could not fail to perceive the striking resemblance which was borne to her by M. de Franconville. A certain suspicion entered my mind, and I candidly replied to all the lady's interrogations.

"Poor creature!" said she, in a compassionate tone of voice; "and are you now penitent."

I burst into tears, and my well-affected sorrow produced an immediate impression upon the lady. She took me by the hand, led me to her carriage, which was waiting in the Rue Vivienne, and ordered the coachman to drive to Passy.

"You are another of my son's victims," said the Countess de Franconville—for she was my seducer's mother; "and I am delighted that an accident has thrown you in my way. I will make that reparation to you which he doubtless never would. You shall inhabit my house at Passy, and there you may lead a comfortable existence. Nor shall I forget you in my will. I have already heard of your loves with Germilly, and of the unfortunate death of that young man. You might dwell in my town residence, but there you would be liable to meet my son,—and such interviews cannot be too religiously avoided.

My benefactress fulfilled her promise; and for some weeks I was happy and comfortable in an abode where every one treated me with kindness and respect. I passed as the widow of an officer in the army, who was closely related to the Countess; and I candidly confess that those few weeks were the happiest of my life. They are pleasing reminiscences to which the mind looks back as the traveller glances towards the green fields and trees which border the desert upon which he is entering.

But this state of existence was not destined to continue for any length of time. One evening the young Count made his appearance at the peaceful residence, while his mother was in Paris. He was pale and haggard, his looks were terrific, and his demeanour strange and wild. He threw himself into a chair, and buried his face in his hands.

"Anastasie," said he at length, "I am undone, unless you come to my assistance. My mother does not speak to me—I have drawn so heavily upon her bankers, that she has closed my account with them, and I am totally dependent on her! I have just lost a large sum of money at play, and—O God! I was mad at the time—"

"What have you done!" said I, dreadfully alarmed.

"I have forged my mother's name to a cheque," he continued. "It will be presented to-morrow morning, and I shall be ruined."

"What can I do for you?" said I, forgetting at the moment all I had suffered from him, and feeling really interested in his position.

"Give me the plate, the pictures, and the valuables in this house,"

said he, " and I can procure the money to take up the cheque myself to-morrow morning, before the banks are opened. I will never forget your kindness as long as I live !"

" Impossible !" cried I. " What will the Countess say ?"

" You must leave the house, and trust to me to make your peace with her. She cannot long remain incensed with me."

" And the servants ?"

" If you will only consent," was the answer, " I can manage that difficulty."

But I hesitated still : he saw the combat that was taking place in my mind, and continued as follows :—

" I have a thousand francs in my pocket—you will want money, if you leave this house : the thousand francs are at your service, and I will write you an order upon my wife's milliner for any thing you may require."

" I consent," said I, after a moment's pause; and I swear most solemnly that no crime, of which I have ever been guilty, tormented me so much as this. The plate, the pictures, the time-pieces, and the china were all packed up, conveyed to a hackney-coach, and taken possession of by the Count. I did not wait to see the work of spoliation completed, but hurried away from the spot with feelings that made me even envy those which must have been experienced by Judas Iscariot, when he departed to hang himself !

On the following morning I met the Countess de Franconville on the Boulevards des Italiens.

" Anastasie !" said she in astonishment.

" 'Tis I, *Madame !*" was my answer.

" And what has brought you to Paris ?"

" I called—I came—that is— I thought—"

" My son has been to annoy you!" interrupted the Countess : " he came to my hotel yesterday while I was out, and saw a letter from you lying open on the table. I know he read it, because it was moved from the place in which I left it."

" Indeed, *Madame*," said I, casting down my eyes, for I dared not meet her glances, " I can assure you—"

" Tell me the truth, Anastasie," said she, kindly, " he has been to see you."

" He has," was my reply.

" When ?"

" Last evening."

" Did he ask you for money ?"

I remained silent : the Countess repeated the question.

" He did, *Madame*," said I at length.

" Do you love him still, Anastasie ?"

" I do."

" And you gave him all you had ?"

" All that you had given me, *Madame*."

" That was not much !" said the Countess.

" More than you imagine, " I observed.

" But we cannot talk in the street," said the Countess after a moment's consideration. " My carriage waits at a little distance—I have

been making a few purchases,—you shall accompany me to my hotel."

"Madame de Franconville!" cried I, "I cannot."

"What means this agitation? You are ill—you are annoyed! Oh! is it not enough that my son has destroyed your peace of mind for ever? or must he torment you still?" exclaimed the generous lady.

"An appointment—a pressing appointment," said I, hurriedly, "will prevent me from having the pleasure of accompanying you now. You are my benefactress—and I owe you much: do not press me to go with you at the present moment!"

"This conduct of your's astonishes—nay, displeases me, *Mademoiselle*," said the Countess. "Certainly I shall not attempt to force you into my carriage; but I appeal to you—by all I have done for you, do not see my son!"

"*Madame*—" I began.

"Nay—do not protest or declare anything," said she, interrupting me with firmness. "If you persist in leaving me now, I shall know what to think, and you need not return to the dwelling which I have provided for you."

At this moment, the Count de Franconville came up to the spot where we were standing. He bowed respectfully to his mother, and seemed surprised that we should be there in earnest conversation together.

"I see that I am betrayed," said he,—"betrayed by a wretch, who—"

"No, Sir," cried Madame de Franconville, "this young woman has maintained that she had no appointment with you. But can I believe that this meeting is the result of pure accident?"

The young nobleman waited not to hear these last words. He doubtless felt convinced that his mother knew all—that I had betrayed him—and that even the servants of the house at Passy, whom he had bribed over to his interests, would confess that the robbery was not committed by unknown depredators. He walked hastily away, and returned to his own house. On his arrival there, he ordered his domestics to serve up the best meal and the best wines his pantry and cellar could respectively afford. When he had eaten copiously of several delicacies, and drank two bottles of Champagne, he wrote a letter to his mother and another to his wife, confessing all his delinquencies, and then blew his brains out. His valet rushed into the room, and found his master a corpse beneath a table laden with delicacies, and laying upon an elegant Brussels carpet, amidst foils, whips, boxing-gloves, pistols, dog-collars, vases of flowers and scents, and all the accessaries to fashionable luxury.

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I have only a few words now to add. My career has been a short one in the paths of vice: I hope it may be longer in the road of virtue. An excellent old man lately bestowed his affections upon me, believing me to be a virtuous girl. He offered me marriage—the day was fixed—and he entrusted me with a cheque for a large amount to carry to his banker's. I kept the money and expended

it. Some weeks passed away, and I studiously avoided the places where I was likely to encounter my victim: but at length he met me, and in a moment of indignation handed me over to the tender mercies of the law. I shall be punished—nothing can save me—but I shall issue from my prison with the determination of becoming a harmless, if not a virtuous or useful member of society.

"Can she be saved from punishment?" inquired Mr. Winkle, when this narrative was brought to a conclusion.

"Impossible!" responded Mr. Pickwick. "But an alleviation of her sufferings may be ensured by pecuniary assistance. I shall myself undertake the fulfilment of that task."

"Poor girl!" said Mr. Tupman; "she may yet become all that she might have been without the vicious example of her mother!"

"I really think you still entertain a distant partiality in that quarter," said Mr. Winkle.

"Who—I?" exclaimed Mr. Tupman.

"Yes—whom else could I mean?" was the answer.

"I am certain that something more than philanthropy, Winkle, prompted you to offer to lend Anastasie a large sum of money, when you knew her by the name of Madame de l'Amour," said Mr. Tupman, maliciously.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Winkle.

"Do not kick me under the table," cried Mr. Tupman, retreating a few paces.

"Well—some one has been kicking me too for the last five minutes," remarked Mr. Snodgrass; "and I declare it is Winkle," he added, after having made a survey beneath the table.

"Pure accident," said Mr. Winkle, colouring up to the eyes, and an inch or so above them.

"My dear friends," cried Mr. Pickwick, looking kindly upon his companions through his immortal (immortal, if not eternal) spectacles, "let us not dispute. We are all men—and women are women!"

Having made this profound observation, Mr. Pickwick proceeded to order dinner.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

CAPTAIN HORATIO CLARENCE WALSINGHAM TEACHES THE YOUNG IDEA HOW TO SHOOT.—A VISIT TO THE SUTHERLAND ARMS INN.—SONGS, LINES, &c.—AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

We must again request our readers to put on the cap of Fortunatus, and transport themselves from Paris to the abode of Mr. Peter Muggins in Upper Stamford Street, London. The son and heir of Mr. Peter Muggins had just returned from school, to be present at his sister's wedding; and Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham was expected every moment, he having kindly promised his future father-in-law to accompany the young heir in a little ramble through the English metropolis. The Captain was so quiet and steady a young man, that Mr. Muggins, senior, had not the slightest objection to entrust his son to the care of such an exemplary individual as the aspirant to the hand of Miss Aramintha.

"Here I am, old fellow," said the Captain, when he at length made his appearance; "and pretty punctual, too—I hope."

He had merely arrived about an hour and a quarter behind the appointed time.

"You will take some lunch before you go out," cried Mr. Muggins; and having summoned his domestic, he was proceeding to order up the tray, when he was very unceremoniously stopped by an announcement on the part of the servant, that the cold meat, to which he slightly alluded, had ceased to exist.

"The cold weal is all eat up," said the domestic, leaning with considerable ease of manner over the back of Captain Walsingham's chair; an attitude which caused that gentleman to assure her that she was an excellent young woman for a limited number of individuals at a tea-party.

"The cold meat gone!" exclaimed Mr. Muggins; "and where is it gone to, pray?"

"The way of all flesh, to be sure," was the reply. "You don't suppose that I can live upon nothink?"

"And yet," observed Captain Walsingham, "there are people in Tartary—the realms of my friend the Great Cham—who breakfast upon the lightest and most wholesome thing you can conceive. It neither sits heavy upon their stomachs, nor costs their masters a single fraction."

"And what is that inwallyable article?" demanded Mr. Muggins, hastily, probably with a view of adopting the same in his own household, he having a constant eye to economy as well as to the cold meat.

"What is it?" cried the Captain; "why—air, to be sure!"

"And is that good to eat?" inquired young Master Peter Muggins, who was a thin, raw, lanky, ill-looking youth of sixteen, with large red hands, very buxom cheeks, and long light hair, resembling an infinite number of skeins of packthread tied negligently together.

"Good to eat?" cried the Captain disdainfully; "yes—and to fatten

on, too! I know no article of food that is finer than air—when you have got nothing else," he added in a lower tone of voice.

"But about this cold meat, Mary," continued Mr. Muggins: "I shall really be eaten out of house and home! It was only last night that the rats devoured the brimstone off all the matches, and the cat overturned the milk-jug into the tinder-box!"

"Well—never mind the lunch," cried Captain Walsingham. "Are you ready, Peter?"

"Quite," answered the hopeful son of the economical Mr. Muggins.

"Then let us brush."

"What—our hats?"

"No—off," returned the Captain; and with these words, he rose, intimated a temporary farewell to his intended father-in-law through the truly original and polite *medium* of a slap on the back that made the old gentleman reel; and then issued from the house, swinging himself from side to side as if he were afflicted with St. Vitus's dance. The young scion of the glorious race of the Muggins's sneaked along by his side; and in this manner they passed over Waterloo Bridge and entered the Strand.

"Where are we going?" enquired Master Muggins, timidly.

"Going?" cried the Captain: "no fashionable men ever know where they are going—unless it be to the devil. But, heavens!" ejaculated Horatio Clarence, stepping back two paces, and eyeing his companion from top to toe, "tell me—do not keep me in suspense—"

"What?" exclaimed Master Muggins, considerably alarmed at the strange conduct of his companion.

"Who built your coat, my dear boy?" demanded Captain Walsingham.

"Why?" asked the youth, colouring even to the crown of his head.

"Because it is horrible," answered the gallant Captain: "the skirts too wide—the waist too loose—the collar too low—"

"And what is there in a coat?" inquired the uninitiated Master Muggins, with a vacant stare.

"A coat!" exclaimed the Captain. "What is there in a coat? The stamp of a gentleman—the passport to society—the token of taste—the criterion of manners, birth, rank—every thing, in fine!"

"Indeed!" said the wondering youth.

"Yes—indeed!" cried his companion. "If I had met you in the Park, with that coat on, I should have cut you. But come to my tailor, and he shall equip you. If you were in Tartary, all you would have to do would be to run into the woods, kill a lion or a tiger, take his skin off, make two holes in it, thrust your arms through, and take care that the tail fell properly down behind: you would then have a coat, ready made in the best fashion of the country. But here they have no such advantages. This is my tailor's shop."

"But I have two suits of clothes already," objected the young man; 'and scarcely require any more."

"If your clothes would shame a street-sweeper, you must have others," persisted the individual to whose care and guidance Mr. Muggins had so prudently consigned his son.

"My papa would call it waste," said Master Peter.

"Call it fiddlestick!" cried the Captain; and as he spoke he drag-

ged his companion into the tailor's shop. "Measure this gentleman directly, Mr. Snipbodkin;" and in obedience to this command, which was delivered in an authoritative tone of voice, a little man, redolent of Virginia, and breathing Barclay and Perkins, leapt from the boards of his counter to those of the floor, and began handling Master Peter Muggins's limbs in a highly skilful manner.

"Three, two," called out the tailor to a dirty boy, who wrote on an equally dirty piece of paper the numbers indicative of the measurement, which his master proclaimed to him.

"That's right," exclaimed Captain Walsingham, laughing heartily; and seating himself upon the counter at the same time, he surveyed with the most critical eye the proceedings of Snipbodkin.

A tailor is the natural enemy of the human race. If any misfortune happen to a man, a tailor is always at the bottom of it. Who is it that causes the sudden gaps in society, by the withdrawal of "the best fellows in the world" from our clubs and dinner-tables? The tailor, of course: he is a lion in the path of every one who owes him a bill: he goes about "seeking whom he may devour." It is to gratify his prejudices, and minister to his unholy feelings, that those mansions of security, whose walls are topped with *chevaux-de-frise*, were built. It is he who fills them with inmates. Enquire at the Farringdon Hotel* or the Royal Repose,† or any similar caravanserail, in or out of town, and you will find that the tailor is the *genius loci*. It was a happy idea of the Greeks to arm the presiding Destiny with sheers: they knew well that the tailor's symbol was the best emblem of Fate. In exercising the attributes of his craft, he invariably typifies the future lot of his victim. He taketh his measure for a double purpose—not only that he may fit him with garments, but that he may know his height, his breadth, and his minutest personal characteristics to a nicety, for necessary identification hereafter. As he encircles the limbs with his parchment shreds, he is even then thinking of the parchment writ whereon his name is to appear conjunct with those of Messieurs John Doe, and Richard Roe, at as early a day as the liberality of his customer will enable him to secure. His basting, his over-laying, his cutting out and sewing up, are all metaphorically applicable to the future. Like the statue of Janus, he has two faces—his *customer* and his *creditor* aspect. The first is hidden in smiles and affability: the latter is shown in strong surly inflexibility. *Au premier abord*, he is as smooth as silk: when he pays his final visit, he is as stiff as buckram. When he is first evoked, he is the slave of the employer: when the term has expired, he is the inexorable demon exacting the price of his contract. He opens the account with cringing humility: he closes it with stern violence. At the commencement of his intercourse he heralds his approach with a gentle harmonious ring at the bell: at the termination thereof, his entry is effected by means of a sullen single knock at the door. He appears to doubt his own existence and individuality as he tremblingly essays the *first* suit: he puts you in fear of

* The Fleet Prison, which is in Farringdon Street.

† The Queen's Bench. These places of retirement for decayed gentlemen and insolvent black-legs, have also been denominated "Spike Island" "Denman's Park," &c. &c., by some of their facetious inmates.

your own, as he prefers the *last*. He has been termed "a sufferer" *par excellence;* but if he suffer, it is not for conscience' sake. If the state of society, however, will not permit the disuse of garments, let us adopt no half measures. Employ the first names in the trade—be liberal in your orders, and magnificent in your style. Remember the *dictum* of ancient Pistol—"Base is the slave that pays," and when your tailor sends in your bill, imitate the principle of rejection adopted in Parliament, and move "that it be read that day six months."

But while the reader has had time to peruse these observations, the substance of which filled Captain Walsingham's imagination on this occasion,—Mr. Snipbodkin completed the measurement of Master Peter Muggins.

"My dear Sir," whispered the youth to his intended brother-in-law, "I do not want these clothes; and even if I did, pa will not give me the money to pay for them."

"Pay! vulgar idea!" cried Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham aloud. "Mr. Snipbodkin gives the best tick in the world; and if he dared send in a bill—"

"Oh! no, Sir," interrupted the tailor,—"no bills till they're asked for, I assure you, Sir."

"Send them home on Saturday," said the Captain, swaggering out of the shop, followed by the astounded Peter, who sneaked behind his companion in a way which induced many people to believe that he was a pickpocket who had an eye to the Captain's handkerchief.

"Where are we going to now?" enquired Master Muggins.

"To my boot-maker's," was the answer; and in a few minutes Captain Walsingham turned into a shop whither he was followed by the youth entrusted to the benefit of his experience and example.

"What for?" asked the young man, timidly.

"Can't walk with you, if you wear such shoes," replied the Captain. "Here—take the dimensions of this gentleman's foot, Mr. Awlworthy."

"Directly, Sir," said the boot-maker; and flinging his new customer upon a chair, he took up his foot with such precipitation, that Master Peter Muggins lost his balance, and fell to the ground. "Beg pardon, Sir—a thousand pardons, Sir. There, now you are all right again. Patent leather, of course?"

"Of course," cried Captain Walsingham; and the particulars of the order were forthwith entered in the ponderous folio upon the compter.

"High heels, I suppose?" said the boot-maker.

"An inch and a quarter at least," returned the Captain; "and mind, Awlworthy, that they are sent home to this gentleman on Saturday night, or you shall lose my custom for ever."

Mr. Awlworthy would doubtless have been exceedingly vexed to deprive himself, by any indiscretion of his own, of the patronage of an individual who not only ordered upon credit at least one pair of boots per month, but who moreover condescended to borrow a few pounds every time he entered the shop.

"What do you mean by all this?" asked Master Muggins, mustering up a few sparks of courage. "If you intend to give me these articles, I cannot accept them; and if you intend me to pay for them, I cannot do so without the assistance of my father."

"Tick is the order of the day, my dear fellow," was the answer,

delivered in a contemptuous tone of voice; "never bother yourself about payment. If I had time I would conduct you to Forbes's splendid laboratory in the Blackfriars' Road. Every man of fashion visits that place, and purchases some of his famous Phœnix Pomade or Jelly of Roses. He supplies the Royal Family; and being a deuced liberal gentlemanly fellow himself, gets plenty of custom. When I had a favourite horse of mine shaved last year, the coat didn't come quick enough, and so I rubbed him all over with this Phœnix Pomade: the consequence was, that all his hair grew again by the very next morning. But, as I was saying, never think of paying!"

"But that is dishonest," said the youth.

"Captain Walsingham intimated that if it were dishonest, it was only "over the left," and that a man could not wear "a shocking bad hat." He then assured Master Peter Muggins "that his mother knew that he was out;" and wound up his very elegant oration by declaring "that it was just as he thought, and no more than he expected." He did not, however, condescend to explain the subject of this unchangeable conviction.

"Now then," said Captain Walsingham, after a long silence, during which he and his companion had reached Charing Cross, "as I am rather thirsty, and as you must see a little of life, I will just introduce you to a set of the nicest fellows in existence."

Without uttering another word of explanation relative to the place whither he was conducting his young friend, Captain Walsingham turned to the right, lounged leisurely towards St. Martin's Lane, struck into May's Buildings, and led Master Peter into an elegant and fashionable little public house, called the *Sutherland Arms*.

The coffee-room of this select hotel is about five yards long by three in breadth. It is dimly lighted—or rather the darkness is diminished—by two panes of glass looking into a small court-yard bounded by high walls; and thus a greasy coat, shabby pantaloons, or a gossamer hat may pass unnoticed in one of the snug little boxes which grace and utilize the room. The walls are conveniently covered with matting to the height of about four feet; and an immense fire is invariably maintained in the grate, in summer or winter, the scope of the kitchen below being somewhat circumscribed, inasmuch as only one person can stand in it at a time.

The moment Captain Walsingham and his friend entered this luxurious abode, a waiter, who, having been engaged all the morning in washing the glasses, had not found time to do the same by his own face, darted from an obscure recess, exclaiming with Horsemonger-lane ease and Newgate press-yard familiarity, "Gin, brandy, rum, or ale?"

"Neither," answered Captain Walsingham. "Whisky and cigars."

The order was executed as soon as the waiter had found leisure to fetch the liquor from the bar, and stop in the passage where there was a pump, to dilute it with cold water to increase the apparent quantity of the spirit; after which achievements he filled up the tumblers from the mighty cauldron simmering on the fire. In the meantime Captain Walsingham had spoken to, and Master Muggings had timidly scrutinized, the inmates of the room.

One old gentleman, who had no nap to his coat, was taking one in

the corner; and a tall good-looking man, whom the others called "The Poet," (probably from the seediness of his appearance) was seated next to him, smoking a "flat" and a cigar at the same time. The "flat" was a young gentleman, with an affected voice, long curling hair, blue eyes, a lying tongue, and patent leather boots; and as he sipped his liquor he drank in at the same time the "blarney" of the Poet with as great a relish as he bestowed upon the brandy-and-water. Five or six other gentlemen, who if they had not been smoking and drinking at the *Sutherland Arms*, would most likely have been exercising themselves in sweeping a crossing, completed the party to which Captain Walsingham, like a discreet guardian, had introduced the youth entrusted to his care.

"Have you been to Calais lately?" demanded Captain Walsingham of the Poet.

"No—I have not," was the reply: "pressing business has kept me here in England for the last seven or eight months."

This was perfectly true; as the Poet had just passed that period in Whitecross Street prison.

"Bones had promised us a song before you came in," continued the Poet: "I hope he will not disappoint us."

"Certainly not," cried Mr. Bones—an individual who lived upon his wits, and drank seventeen glasses of whisky before dinner every day. "So here goes;" and without further prelude, he regaled the company in the following manner, his voice finding an agreeable accompaniment in the singing of the large tea-kettle on the fire.

SONG.

From her warm couch at break of day does Mrs. Dilkins rise,
To see that Mary picks the plums, and Jane begins the pies;
The daughters have already thought of dressing and hair-curling,
For uncle Joe, who comes to dine, is worth ten thousand sterling.

The fashionable milliner, Miss Tippet, comes at nine;
At ten, good Mr. Dilkins goes to fetch up all the wine:
Lastwiggle, the shoemaker's man, has promised for eleven—
And Mr. Gunter comes at twelve, then goes away till seven!

At five the ladies haste to dress. Letitia's lost her pearls—
A trifle *that* to Mary's grief— for she can't find her curls;
Sophia's gown is much too long—the flounce is quite outrageous:
"To wear a sash like this," says Jane, "one must be more courageous."

But time is precious: Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Simmons wait—
And Mr. Dobson's family are never very late:
Sir Wiggan Browne—Miss Caringcross—and Mr. Samuel Wilkins,
Were never known to pass the hour when they dined at the Dilkins'.

"How are you, Dilkins?"—"Thank'ee, Stubbs, why tolerably well."—
"What was the price of stock to-day?"—"What, Spanish?"—"Yes."—
"It fell."—

"Do you know any thing about that Steam-hair-cutting Company?"—
"Oh! yes—they asked me for some cash; but hang me if I stump any"

Dinner's served up, and Uncle Joe (he's not quite sixty-nine)
Insists on helping Mrs. D. to carve a stubborn chine:
Poor Mrs. Dilkins looks aghast—to hesitate unable—
And in the course of half an hour the chine rolls from the table.

Dessert appears—each her one glass of Port the ladies take,
And then (exiled by barb'rous law) the gentlemen forsake;
The Claret comes—and Mr. Stubbs the ladies' health proposes—
Then sacred to the hosts' fair daughters all the wine that flows is.

Need we detail how all this ends? Poor Mr. Dilkins falls
Beneath the table, while he for another bottle calls;
Old Uncle Joe and Mr. Stubbs dispute like Whigs and Tories,
And Mr. Dobson tells the rest a thousand curious stories.

Next morning Uncle Joseph strikes the Dilkins' from his will,
Because the treat they gave for him has made him very ill.
The use of asking folks to dine is therefore still a question—
Your relatives you ne'er must seek to kill through indigestion!

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted Captain Walsingham.

"Bravo!" cried the Poet, at the top of a voice rendered almost unintelligible by inebriety.

"When I was in Tartary, we used to sing national airs, as we galloped along at the rate of fifty miles an hour," observed Captain Walsingham. "Indeed the horses go so quick in that country, that in the course of two minutes you get from a place where the wind is north-west, to another where it is blowing due south."

"Extraordinary!" cried the Poet. "But who will favour us with the next song?"

"I will," ejaculated Captain Walsingham. "Here is one for the first of May—May-day, you know—on which the chimney-sweeps dance."

A DIALOGUE.

Pray who's the little boy that is dancing so nimbly?
Come, Mary—bring a half-penny down!—
Please Ma'am, I'm the feller as swept your chimbley,
An' I'm wery much obleeged for the brown.—

Alas! how his schooling has been neglected!
But perhaps his kind father's dead?—
No, Ma'am—he's a tinker as is wery much respected;
An' this mornin' he's drunk in bed.—

Perchance 'tis a motherless child that they've fixed on
To dance. Does your mamma live still?—
Yes, Ma'am—at this moment she's stayin' at Brixton
Vith a gen'leman as keeps a mill.—

Poor child! he is miserably clad—how shocking!
Not to give him some clothes were a sin!—
Thank'ee, Ma'am—but I does'nt want no shoe nor stocking,
I'd rayther have a quartern o' gin!

"That's very good," said the Poet; "but I can do something better than that."

Captain Walsingham very coolly and deliberately assured the Poet in figurative language that he was uttering a condemned untruth.

"I can't sing," said the Poet: "but I can do what you can't. I'll make five rhymes to any word in the English language you like."

"Well then—*Xerxes*," cried Captain Walsingham, after a moment's consideration, "and I'll stand a bottle of any thing you like, if you do."

The Poet considered for a few moments, and then commenced as follows:—

LINES ON EDMUND BURKE.

If I were only half so great as Xerxes,
I'd rule the nation with a righteous hand;
But not on despot principles like Burke's. His
Reflections upon France none understand.
He takes a proposition, then he shirks his
Own chosen thesis, which himself had planned.
Through ev'ry page invariably there lurks his
Venomous hatred of a mighty land;
And when he enters on the theme, he works his
Arguments out on grounds where nought can stand.
His soul is far more grov'lling than the Turk's; his
Logic resembles houses built on sand;—
But fifteen hundred pounds a year were stronger
Reas'ning than common sense; and so we'll chide no longer.

"What will you have?" asked Captain Walsingham of the Poet, when the applause, which followed this effusion, had subsided into a dying chuckle.

"Port, to be sure," was the reply; and the waiter, in his astonishment and joy at having an order for wine, actually executed it without adulterating the liquid or stealing more than one glass from the bottle.

"Does the *Eccentric Club* meet here now?" enquired Captain Walsingham, while Master Peter Muggins surveyed the place, the proceedings, the Port, and the people, with the most unfeigned delight.

"Yes, Sir," answered the waiter.

At this moment the old gentleman in the corner awoke from his nap, and called for a cigar.

"We have drank your health while you were asleep, Mr. Ogle," said Captain Walsingham; "and must now call upon you for either a song, a sentiment, a recitation, or a speech."

"Spontaneous and woluntary," observed the waiter, slinking back into his corner, and feasting upon the wit of the company, that being the old kind of food he was likely to regale upon till the evening, he having agreed to board himself, and that being the only part of his contract with his landlord which he was not scrupulously called upon to perform.

"Well, then," said Mr. Ogle; "if I must do something to amuse you, I think I have the means cut and dried to hand. Here is a *Valentine* which a person of my acquaintance wrote last February to his mistress."

With these words, and having the consent of all present, Mr. Ogle took a paper from his pocket, and read the ensuing effusion.

VALENTINE.

It ain't no vonder if my art's a cinder—
Cos vy your eyes is bright as burning ashes;
My buzzim's jist for all the vorld like tinder,
My soul is shivered to a thousand smashes.

That night ve vent to Bagnigge Vells together,
You wos so wery pretty, though you pouted,
Cos ven ve could n't valk in sich bad veather,
To get a shay your necklisses I spouted.

Don't say I prig'd your vatch—I can't a-bear it,
I merely lent it to my father's brother;—
You need 'nt be afeard that he vill vear it—
Besides, on tick, I soon can get another.

You know how wery fond I am of you, dear—
Don't stand so often at the kitchen vindy:
I'm wery much afeard you love that Jew, dear—
But if you does—G—! von't I make a shindy?

You are my Walentine—I've often sworn it:
But if you hadn't lent me all your vages,
Your conduct wos so bad, none could ha' borne it—
Besides the little diff'rence in our hages.

Make haste and tell me ven you vish to marry—
Cos I'm your man,—you can't desire no better.
Ven you replies—in case it should mis-carry,
You'd better pay the postage of the letter.

"This is really a poetic morning," observed Mr. Bones, when the recitative was brought to a conclusion. "What with the gin, the wine, the cigars, and the poetry, one would really think we were the Muses in disguise!"

"Another glass of grog, John," cried Mr. Ogle.

"A go of gin!" shouted the waiter, through an open pane of glass, looking into the bar; and when he thought it might be ready, he lazily proceeded to fetch it, and mix it in a tumbler with sugar, &c.

"Sixpence, if you please, Sir," said the waiter, as he placed the glass before Mr. Ogle-

"Oh! presently—presently," exclaimed that gentleman. "I want change for a five."

"I only vishes as how I could keep a five pun' note as long as you does," said the waiter doggedly; "for to my certain knowledge you've wanted change for that there von upwards of three year."

"Nonsense—nonsense," cried Mr. Ogle; and after a great deal of reluctance he produced a sixpence from his pocket, and surrendered it with a deep sigh into the waiter's hands, at the same moment that another gentleman entered the room.

"Ah! Crashem, my dear fellow, how are you?" cried the new-comer. "Well, this *is* a blessing to get a sight of you! Now—don't do as you did in Paris when we met at Meurice's! You must recollect your old school-fellow Tims," added the new-comer, in a sarcastic tone of voice.

"Tims! Tims!" said Captain Walsingham, to whom the foregoing adjurations were all addressed, and on whose cheek they produced the same effect that is usually caused by a strong acid on a red silk gown: "really, my dear Sir—you must—you are—you cannot be otherwise than mistaken!"

Mr. Tims made no other answer than by putting his fore-finger up to his left eye, and considerably agitating the under lid—a graceful motion, which in fashionable society denotes incredulity, it being deemed ungenteel to give the lie in any terms of a more direct nature.

"Crashem, did you say?" cried Captain Walsingham, after a moment's reflection: "Crashem! I must have known that name some where!" and he winked significantly to Mr. Tims.

"Come now, none of that nonsense," exclaimed Mr. Tims; "for whether your name is Sugden, Crashem, or any thing else, I know you to be a thorough rogue; and since you prey upon friends, I shall not stand it any longer. You swindled me out of forty pounds in Paris——"

"Ah!" ejaculated Master Peter Muggins.

"Certainly, he did," continued the irate Mr. Tims: "and what is more, his real name is Sugden, and his father keeps the *Lanthorn and Cat* tavern in the Borough."

"Waiter!" cried the gentleman thus assailed, in a faint tone of voice, "is this man mad?"

"Mad!" exclaimed Mr. Tims: "yes—mad enough to lend you forty pounds to bring out your Patent Self-Working Elastic Youth-Inspiring Crutches, which you said you had invented; and when you

got the money, you ran away from Paris to St. Omers, and I was obliged to walk all the way to Calais, and then beg my passage across in one of the French steam-boats, because none of the English captains were charitable enough to take me for nothing."

"Really, Mr. Sims—Tims—or rather, Whims—" began the discomfited Mr. William Sugden, "I do not know what you are talking about."

"Don't tell me," vociferated Mr. Tims; "I know you well enough, and can prove my words."

"Will you oblige me with a moment's private conference?" said Master Peter Muggins to the irate commercial traveller, whom our readers doubtless recollect.

"With pleasure, Sir," was the reply. "Are you acquainted with this gentleman?"

"He is to marry my sister," answered the youth. "We know him as Captain Horatio Clarence Walsingham!"

"Captain, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Tims. "I would back long odds that he can't even pay for his gin and water—"

"And the bottle of wine," continued the waiter.

"And the cigars," added the Poet, turning desperately pale, for he was doubtless afraid of being called upon to liquidate his amount of wine and cheroots, in default of the other security.

"I will not stay to be insulted here," exclaimed Mr. William Sugden, rising. "You shall hear from me, Sir," he added, addressing himself to Mr. Tims.

"I should like to, and so would the police on the other side of the water, by all accounts," cried the commercial traveller. "But I am now at your service, Sir," he continued, turning towards Master Muggins; "and can tell you a tale or two about that gentleman, which will effectually prevent any union between him and your sister."

"Take care that you are not taught the fall of a leaf* at Tuck-up fair,"† retorted Mr. Sugden, "or get yourself sent to the Floating-Academy at Woolwich.‡ *You* are not the most immaculate man in existence."

"I never dipped my mawley into a swell's gropus,§ and stood a chance of being lagged for smashing queer screens,‖ as you did once upon a time," cried Mr. Tims, adopting the same elegant figures of rhetoric.

"Depend upon it, I will be even with you yet," returned Mr. Sugden; "and as I know that you are perfectly well acquainted with the flash tongue, put this in your pipe and smoke it:—*Yam eht lived ekat em fi I reve tegrof siht gnineve.*"*

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* The Drop. † The Gibbet. ‡ The Hulks. § A gentleman's pocket.
‖ Passing forged Notes.

* Every word must here be read backwards; the sentence will then stand thus:—"May the devil take me if I ever forget this evening." This species of slang, formed by an *inverted language*, as it were, is common amongst gentlemen of the

"*Secanem ekil eseht era naiv*,"† returned Mr. Tims; and then addressing his attention to Master Peter Muggins, whom he led into a corner of the room, he paid no farther regard to Mr. Sugden.

"Six-and-sixpence, if you please, Sir," said the waiter, as that gentleman was about to leave the house in such precipitation that it is probable he quite forgot the little account.

"Out of the way, scoundrel," exclaimed Mr. Sugden; and he dealt one blow between the eyes of the luckless John, which propelled that individual over a table and deposited him under the grate, from which he rose slowly as Mr. Sugden succeeded in effecting his escape from the room.

"I happen to be acquainted with the illustrious Mr Pickwick and his friends," said Mr. Tims, when he had concluded a long conversation with Master Muggins; "and they also have been taken in by this individual, who, when in Paris, passed under the name of Adolphus Crashem. I shall write to them, by this day's post, a full account of all you have told me."

And Mr. Tims kept his word.

CHAPTER LXIX.

A RESOLUTION TO WHICH MR. PICKWICK, SOLICITED BY MR. TUPMAN, COMES.—MR. SAMUEL WELLER INVITES HIS FRIENDS TO A FAREWELL DINNER.—MR. PICKWICK DOES THE SAME.

Mr. Pickwick was scarcely awake one morning, when Mr. Tupman entered his room, holding to his eyes a large white towel, which he had seized in his hurry instead of a pocket-handkerchief, and uttering the most piteous groans imaginable.

"What is the matter with you, my dear friend?" enquired the philanthropic Mr. Pickwick, seating himself up in his bed.

"Anastasie—poor Anastasie," began Mr. Tupman, heaving a desperate sigh, the din of which could not even be hushed by the towel.

"What of her?" demanded Mr. Pickwick, hastily.

"Condemned!" answered Mr. Tupman, mournfully.

"Condemned!" shouted the great man; "and to what? To universal scorn?"

"No—to six months' imprisonment," was the reply. "Pickwick,

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swell mob and other individuals who occasionally find it convenient to converse in a tongue that is totally unintelligible to even a skilful linguist.

† "Menaces like these are vain."

my dear friend," added Mr. Tupman, after a moment's pause, "Pickwick—I can stay here no longer!"

"Where?" asked that gentleman, glancing around his room uneasily, as if he were afraid of encountering something horrible.

"Here—in Paris," rejoined Mr. Tupman. "With all her faults—I—I loved her. Pickwick!"

"Poor girl!" murmured the hero of these Memoirs, taking his white cotton night-cap gracefully but unaffectedly from his head, and conveying it to his eyes. "Retribution has overtaken her at last!"

"I must leave Paris," said Mr. Tupman: "I cannot breathe the same air as one whom I respect, and who is in a prison."

"If every one left for the same reason, my dear Tupman," suggested the truly learned Mr. Pickwick, "I think Paris would very soon be empty."

"Do not trifle with my feelings, Pickwick," said Mr. Tupman, "I shall return to England forthwith!"

"And I will accompany you," cried Mr. Pickwick, after a moment's pause. "Tupman, ring the bell."

Mr. Pickwick's wishes were obeyed, and Mr. Samuel Weller introduced himself and a jug of hot water into the room.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Sir," cried that functionary.

"We leave Paris to-morrow, Sam."

"To-morrow, Sir!" exclaimed Mr. Weller: "that's raythor short notice, as the traveller said to the thief, ven he cried out, 'Yer money or yer life!'"

"My wishes are such," said Mr. Pickwick, in a serious tone of voice. "To-day we will give our last party. See that there is a good dinner for ten or a dozen people on table at six precisely; and, Sam—"

"Sir!"

"You may ask any one you choose to dine with you at one," added Mr. Pickwick.

"Wery good, Sir," cried Mr. Weller. "The more the merrier, as the conwicts said ven they marched to the hulks."

While Mr. Pickwick was dressing himself, and while Mr. Tupman was communicating these arrangements to Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle, Mr. Samuel Weller wrote two notes from a copy which he had previously made, and directed one to Mr. Knackers and the other to Mr. Porrett. The following is a sworn counterpart, witnessed and attested as such before the British Consul in Paris, of these documents, which deserve to be kept amongst the archives of great men with the same care that the House of Commons bestows upon its own Reports:—

"*Roo royale*, 18.

"Mr. Veller, junior, persents his wery respectful complimints to Mr. Knackers, an' begs to inform him that there vill be a blow out at von percisely this day, Samivel his-self in the cheer, vith other indoocements 2 conwiviality in the shape o' lickers. The cum-penny o' Mr. Knackers is so-lisited.

"N.B.—Heckney-coaches draws up outside the great door-vay. Full-dress, tops an' cords.

"As vitness my signature, an'
"all others is counterfit,
"SAMIVEL VELLER."

Supplying the name of Mr. Porrett for that of Mr. Knackers, the documents were alike; and Mr. Weller, much delighted with his composition, and in imitation of that denizen of the Emerald island who is so often quoted, carried the missives himself to their common destination. He fortunately found his two friends and his father at home—that is, at Wood's chop-house, and, therefore, was enabled to receive verbal replies to his polite invitations.

"Ve're off to-morrow, old un," said Sam to his father; "every man Jack of us, jist like a flight o' young whales, or a shoal o' vild-fowl."

"Wot's the use o' puttin' the veel-hoss afore the leader?" cried Mr. Weller, senior. "But ain't I included in that there inwitation o' your'n, Sammy?"

"In course, you air," replied Sam; "I thought you stood as little on ceremony, as the chap about to be hanged did ven he valked on to the drop afore the parson."

"That was wery impolite, Samivel," said old Mr. Weller, with a most mysterious shake of the head; "I hope you'll never do sich a thing, or else I vouldn't call you von o' the Vellers."

"Vell, I can't stand idlin' avay my time here, cos there's the preparations for two wery grand and fashionable dinners to see about. Guv'ner gives *his* last spread to-day too; but *he* don't dine till six. Fust come, fust served, as the hangman says."

"How d'ye go to-morrow, Sammy?" asked the old coachman.

"Post-chay an' five to Calais," was the answer; "steam to Dovor, and post-chays home."

In the meantime Mr. Pickwick issued his invitations: and—passing over the fashionable repast which took place at one precisely in the kitchen—we shall introduce our readers to that which was done justice to in the parlour. There (in the parlour aforesaid), around a table covered with the luxuries of the season, and with those that had been robbed from other seasons to which they were peculiar, sate Mr. Pickwick in an arm-chair and an excellent humour. Opposite to him was Mr. Tupman, in the vice-president's seat and a new suit of black. On the right of the president, were Mr. Snodgrass, M. Dumont, Mr. Chitty, and Mr. Wegsworth Muffley; and on his left were Mr. Hook Walker, Mr. Winkle, Mr. Scuttle, and Mr. Kallaway. Cooper has written a novel called "The Last of the Mohicans,"—Scott has left us a poem of the "Last Minstrel,"—we have also "The Last Man,"—and a newspaper has given us a report of "The Last of the Charlies,"—and two great men have favoured us with a description of the "Last of the Pickwick Dinners in Paris!" To Mr. Wegsworth Muffley, and Mr. Septimus Chitty, is the world indebted for this elucidation of that important event which would otherwise have remained, like a sealed book, unknown to posterity. The prose of the one, and the poetry of the other, have immortalized this dinner, and history may record it amongst the other achievements of great men.

"I cannot admit that I leave Paris without many—many regrets," observed Mr. Pickwick, in the course of this memorable entertainment: "I confess that there are many ties which connect me and my affections to Paris. In the first place—"

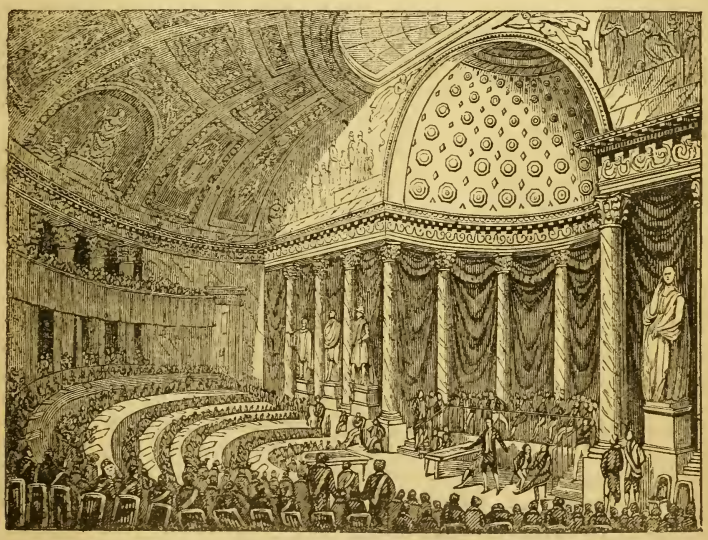
The most profound silence at this moment reigned throughout the room; and Mr. Scuttle having accidentally let fall a pin from his shirt frill, the noise was heard as distinctly as a clap of thunder.

"In the first place," continued Mr. Pickwick, "the wine is most excellent—the water, I confess, is not so good; but as I invariably took the precaution of mixing it with brandy, I have not suffered from that inconvenience."

"And what do you think of the pork?" inquired Mr. Kallaway. "Isn't it a treat to see the sausages and black-puddings in the shops?"

"Quite," returned Mr. Pickwick. "There is only one thing which I have *not* seen, and I regret the oversight. I have visited the Chamber of Deputies, but never the Chamber of Peers."

"Indeed!" exclaimed M. Dumont; "then you have really lost a grand spectacle. I remember when the Ministers of Charles the Tenth were tried in 1830, I was on duty in the Chamber on one of the days during which that memorable trial lasted. Never shall I forget the sight! The calm demeanour of those, who, if they had acted wrong,



had perhaps behaved conscientiously, awoke feelings of the most profound respect and awe in the minds of all present. It was a grand struggle between the sons of Freedom and the advocates of Conservative tyranny; and as all Europe was interested in the fight, so was every nation pleased with the moderation of the result, successful as it was for the new dynasty."

"M. Dumont's good health," cried Mr. Pickwick, and the toast was drank with enthusiasm.

"A friend of mind once made a famous speech in favour of himself,"

observed Mr. Wegsworth Muffley. "He had been condemned to a certain punishment very unjustly, and he harangued the multitude for upwards of two hours from the place where he was confined."

"And from whence did he speak?" enquired Mr. Pickwick: "from the Tower?"

"No—from the stocks," was the reply.

"*Cepit facile*—he took it easy, then," said Mr. Septimus Chitty.

"Very," returned Mr. Wegsworth Muffley. "But there was another gentleman of my acquaintance, whom we used to call the Peripatetic Philosopher, because he harangued his comrades while they were all taking the most violent exercise imaginable."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick: "in the fields, I presume."

"No," rejoined Mr. Muffley.

"Where then?" asked Mr. Pickwick.

"At the tread-mill," was the reply.

"There is one thing in which I envy you your return to England," said Mr. Chitty to Mr. Winkle.

"What is that?" was the very natural question.

"The heavy wet—*grave humidum*," returned Mr. Chitty. "Nothing I like so much as *dimidium et dimidium*."

"As what?" said Mr. Pickwick, who had overheard this portion of the discourse.

"As half-and-half," replied Mr. Chitty.

"Half-and-half!" exclaimed Mr. Scuttle; "well—so it is, I declare! I have been filling my claret up with sherry for the last ten minutes, and should not have perceived it, had there been any more wine in either of the bottles!"

"M. Dumont," said Mr. Pickwick, as soon as a pause in the conversation enabled him to address a few words to the good-hearted Gendarme; "this is the last time we shall tax your kindness (in Paris, at least) for one of your excellent tales. You have often gratified us before, and be assured that should accident or inclination again lead you to England, no man will be more welcome at my house—and I can say the same for my three friends—than yourself!"

"And never shall I forget the kindness I have experienced at your hospitable board," cried Dumont. "If all Englishmen be as generous and open-hearted as yourselves, I have no doubt but that there exists, in the breasts of both French and English, the germ of a lasting peace and union between the two greatest nations in the universe. United, they can defy the world—repress the arrogance and encroachments of Russia—and maintain peace in Europe: separated, they can only retard the progress of civilization and liberty, by the violence of disastrous and useless war."

CHAPTER LXX.

PICKWICK STILL ABROAD, BUT RESOLVES UPON RETURNING HOME.

The sun rose from the lap of Thetis, and Mr. Pickwick from that of Sleep. Thus two luminous objects appeared above the horizon of the common world at the same time. The former divested itself of the clouds of night, and the other of the white cotton cap which had shaded his brow. In a word—one was the sun, and the other was Mr. Pickwick; and in saying that, we leave nothing to the imagination, but say everything.

Alas! the land of France, and especially the city of Paris, knew not the fate that was in store for them. The halls of French philosophy were about to lose a philosopher—whom they had never seen: the Parisian ladies were speedily to dispense with the amatory glances of a Tupman; poetry was to experience a dreadful shock in the return of a Snodgrass to the land of his forefathers; and all classes of society in general would have to deplore the absence of a Winkle. Ill-fated France! alas, that day was one of mourning and tears for thee; for the clouds were black above, and large drops of rain fell upon thy devoted soil!

The arrangements for posting throughout France are entirely in the hands of the government; and thus all attempt at imposition is impossible. The general mews or posting-house in Paris is in the Rue de l'Abbaie Saint Germain; and from the Poste Royale must all horses for private vehicles be procured. This establishment is connected with every posting-house throughout France; and the principles upon which the whole machinery is conducted are as excellent as they are grand. Even the very rope-harness, which astonishes the eye of an Englishman, is a matter of calculation, and the result of an arrangement which enables the traveller to procure posting-horses in France at a cheaper rate than in any other country in the world.

At an early hour on the 2nd of September, 1837, Mr. Samuel Weller proceeded to the Poste Royale, and after a great many very ineffectual attempts at making himself understood—especially as he confounded *cheveux*, which means "hair," with *chevaux*, the name for "horses"

—succeeded in convincing a clerk in the establishment, not only that he was in his right senses—a circumstance at first materially questioned—but also that six gentlemen required horses for an immense travelling carriage which they had procured to convey themselves to Calais.

"Which air de six gentlemans?" enquired a clerk, who spoke a little English.

"Vy," returned Sam, "there's me—there's my father—that's two —and then there's Pickvick, Tupman, Vinkle, and Snodgrass."

"Den you vill require seven horse," said the clerk.

"Seven!" exclaimed Sam: "that be d——d."

"Dere no G— d——n in de matter," cried the clerk, impatiently. "You a Goddem—me know dat vare vell: but you have seven horse —six for you-selves—dat is von for each personage—and den von for de carriage. Dem's de rules."

"Vell, we von't dispute about it, youngster," said Sam, his gravity remaining as imperturbable and severe as ever: "all I knows is, that there's six on us, so jist you send up as many hosses as you can, an' on the most ek-vi-nomical scale; for economy's the order o' the day, as the New Poor Law Commissioners said ven they starved the paupers in the vorkus."

And having thrown the address of his master's residence upon the office table, and made the necessary deposit, Mr. Samuel Weller retured to the Rue Royale in a cabriolet and a violent hurry.

All the friends, and even many of the distant acquaintances of our hero and his companions, were assembled on this eventful morning, to bid adieu to those great men who were about to turn their backs upon France—perhaps for ever! We need not enumerate the names of all those who met together upon this occasion: the ties of friendship and the prospects of a good breakfast were inducements sufficient to entice all who had ever shaken the illustrious Mr. Pickwick by the hand, to witness his departure.

"I really envy you your return to England," said Mr. Chitty to Mr. Winkle: "you will see your *melius dimidium*—better half, once more, and will again enjoy the endearments of home."

"I should like to take some claret back with me," observed Mr. Winkle, "as well as gloves and *eau-de-cologne*."

"Alas!" resumed Mr. Septimus Chitty; "when the unjust persecutions of my enemies in England shall have ceased, I may myself hope to return to my native land."

"And will they terminate soon—these persecutions of which you are talking?" asked Mr. Winkle.

"In seven years—by the statute of limitation," was the answer—an explanation which reminded Mr. Winkle that the unrelenting enemies complained of were nothing more nor less than certain tailors, boot-makers, hatters, &c., who, when grouped together, are termed "creditors." But we never yet heard a man speak well of the people who had trusted him, and who merely wished to recover the amounts due to them: and even in the English debtors' prisons, there is not a soul who (according to his own account) either owes a farthing or ought to be there.

"You will have a beautiful day for travelling," remarked Mr. Wegsworth Muffley to Mr. Pickwick. "It was just such weather as this, when I set out last year upon my celebrated Hampshire tour, starting from London to Portsmouth in a vehicle and four horses."

"Ah! a coach, I presume," said Mr. Pickwick.

"No, it was not," returned the traveller.

"A four-in-hand, I dare say, then," exclaimed our hero, with a cunning smile, as if he had guessed a great secret.

"Wrong again," cried Mr. Muffley, provokingly.

"What was it then? a post-chaise and four?"

"No—the waggon," answered Mr. Muffley.

In the meantime three gentlemen, who were seated together at one end of the table, were making a desperate attack upon the cold meat and hot rolls, and their tongues worked as freely as their jaws the whole time.

"Wasn't that a spree last night, Jopling?" asked one.

"Was it not?" cried the gentleman thus appealed to. "How did you get home, Lipman?"

"Oh! Walker and I reeled home together, didn't we?" cried Mr. Lipman.

"It was our system," answered Mr. Hook Walker. "But I broke my violin in a scuffle as we went along the streets. That, however, was not a part of my usual system."

It appears that Mr. Walker had regaled his friends with a little music at their own residence on the previous evening; and that being eventually tired of playing the part of fiddler, he got as drunk as one, by way of a change.

"I say, Snodgrass, my dear fellow," whispered Mr. Lipman to that gentleman, "you couldn't do me a little favour, could you?"

"What is it?" demanded Mr. Snodgrass.

"Why—I have got a small balance in the hands of my London bankers, Aldgate, Pump, and Company, Whitechapel; and if you could do me the favour to cash my cheque upon them, I should esteem it a very great obligation that I lay myself under to you," said Mr. Lipman. "It's only fifteen pound, ten, and seven-pence half-penny," added Mr. Lipman, taking a popular, and therefore dirty song-book from his pocket, and pretending to refer to it as if it were his bankers' account.

"To tell you the truth," said Mr. Snodgrass, who was by this time tired of lending and advancing monies, the interest even of which he never heard of—much less saw, "I am rather short myself, and—"

"Well, well, no matter," interrupted Mr Lipman. "You can cash my cheque for a five, I suppose."

"Really, my dear Sir—" began Mr. Snodgrass.

"Well,—say two pun' ten," cried Mr. Lipman.

"My travelling expenses—"

"Lend us a guinea, then, and there's an end of it," said Mr. Lipman, by way of clinching the matter at once.

Mr. Snodgrass tendered the twenty-six francs demanded, but Mr. Lipman, by some unaccountable oversight, forgot to tender the cheque upon the eminent and wealthy firm of Aldgate, Pump, and Company.

"You will not forget your promise about poor Anastasie," said Mr.

Tupman, in a whisper to Mr. Kallaway. "I and Pickwick will take care that you shall receive regularly the sum we have agreed upon—"

"Depend upon my exactitude," interrupted Mr. Kallaway. "When I was staying with old Clumley, my deceased father-in-law, if ever he told me to get up early, I was invariably half an hour before him, and had often fed the pigs before he had turned out. 'Kallaway,' said Tom Austin to me one day, 'you're the most regular man in this part of the country.'—'I wish as how you was too, Mr. Austin,' said the tax-gatherer, who overheard this conversation, 'for there's two quarters owing now, and I don't see any chance of ever getting one.'—That's a proof of my exactitude, I hope," added Mr. Kallaway.

"Certainly it is," replied Mr. Tupman. "But occasionally you will do me the favour—"

"To send Anastasie a leg of pork!" interrupted Mr. Kallaway: "beyond all doubt, I will—and a nice spare-rib into the bargain. Richard Holloway never ate anything else but my pork, when I was in England."

"I did not exactly mean *that*, my dear friend," exclaimed Mr. Tupman; "but any little attention on your part to that poor penitent creature—"

Mr. Kallaway squeezed Mr. Tupman's hand, and Mr. Tupman squeezed a tear out of his eye; and the two gentlemen having thus satisfactorily understood each other, the conversation dropped between them.

"Have you ever heard anything about your friend Mr. Adolphus Crashem?" enquired Mr. Jopling of Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh! yes," answered that gentleman. "Some time ago I received a letter from a Mr. Tims—I don't know whether you were acquainted with him—"

"Didn't we all pass an evening in the Jug together?" cried Mr. Jopling.

"In the New Prison!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "Ah! so we did—I recollect now. Well—this Mr. Tims has written me a long letter, telling me all about Mr. Crashem, and how he exposed him in a public house where they met. It appears that Crashem, or rather Sugden—for that I believe, is his real name—was going to marry Miss Muggs or Muggins, and that Mr. Tims prevented the match. What has become of Sugden since that period, I don't know."

"He's as wide-awake a cove as any I ever met," observed Mr. Jopling, to the great astonishment of Mr. Pickwick, who had not even intimated that Mr. Sugden was addicted to sleep: "a man must get up very early in the morning to take him in."

"Or rather he mustn't go to bed at all," exclaimed Mr. Lipman, exercising his own tongue while he cut a large slice out of a cold one that stood before him.

"You don't eat, my dear Scuttle," said Mr. Winkle to that gentleman.

"I am sorry to part with so many friends, and have lost my appetite," replied Mr. Scuttle. "These kinds of things always affect me more or less. I remember, when I lived in London, a great fire took place in a house opposite to mine one night; and though I had only been in bed an hour, I thought it was morning, and rang the bell for

breakfast. Indeed, I never disovered my mistake, till I put my head out of the window, and received a cascade of water from one of the engines in my left eye. I was ill for a week after."

At this moment, M. Dumont was ushered into the room by Mr. Samuel Weller; and a very red face at the same time protruded itself in at the doorway. A smile beamed upon that red countenance, and one of its eyes indulged in several elaborate and palpable winks, as it surveyed the numerous individuals seated round the table.

"Walk in, Mr. Weller," said Mr. Pickwick, who had recognized the countenance, the smile, and the winking eye: "this is the last time we shall all of us meet together in this room."

"Wehicle's at the door, Sir," said Sam, who now stepped forward to announce the fact: "an' a wery nice shay it is—on'y four hosses, tho' ve pays for seven."

"And here are you passports," observed M. Dumont. "I promised to save you the trouble of getting them signed yourselves, and that has made me late." With these words the Gendarme laid the documents upon the table.

"We must now think of bidding adieu to our friends," said Mr. Pickwick, "and of shortening the hour of departure as much as possible. One of the most important periods of my life has been passed in Paris; and though I have occasionally met with disagreeable adventures, still the reminiscences of them are almost entirely effaced from my mind by the many—many happy hours that I have spent in this great city. I have been particular in keeping notes and minutes of all that has happened to me since the day I left England. The numerous songs, tales, and anecdotes that I have heard or read, are carefully entered in my memorandum-book; and on my return to England I shall place the whole in the hands of some gentleman connected with the press, and who at the same time is conversant with France, and acquainted with the characteristics of her inhabitants, for the purpose of laying them before the public in a proper form."

"The talented editor of your travels and adventures in England would be the most fitting person for such a work," observed Mr. Chitty. "He is the most popular writer of the day, and from the manner in which he executed the important task you formerly entrusted to his care and abilities, certainly deserves your confidence in this instance."

"No,—" returned Mr. Pickwick; "I am sorry to say that he declines the labour, and it therefore remains for me to find one who will be bold enough to undertake it, with the fear of being called an imitator and a plagiarist before his eyes. I am perfectly aware that there will be much hypercriticism to contend with—that many journals will be severe, if not actually overwhelming, in their remarks upon this new undertaking

Mr. Pickwick took off his spectacles, and wiped them—and Mr. Chitty declares that he also applied his handkerchief to his eyes ere he again put on the immortal glasses. Be that as it may—a tear dimmed every eye around the table; and then hands were shaken, and vows of lasting friendship were exchanged, and promises to write letters were given, and messages to acquaintances in England were sent, and then the shaking of hands was gone through all over again.

"You remember my invitation," said Mr. Pickwick to M. Dumont: "I hope that in a very short time I shall have an opportunity of returning all the kindnesses you have shown me, in my own house at Dulwich."

"Here is a letter for Mrs. Siffkin," cried Mr. Scuttle, who had almost forgotten the epistle which he had written the previous evening: "she has one child, I know—but whether it's a boy or girl, I really forget. You can remember me to it."

"If you ever publish any of your poems," said Mr. Chitty to Mr. Snodgrass, "*animus*—mind you send me a copy."

"And you will write to me about Anastasie," whispered Mr. Tupman to Mr. Kallaway.

To all these speeches, suitable answers were returned.

"You wont have my cheque, then, upon Aldgate and Pump for the whole?" asked Mr. Lipman.

"I had rather not, I thank you," returned Mr. Snodgrass, as if he were the person obliged by the offer.

"Now, then," cried old Mr. Weller, "the shay is a vaitin', an' von o' the hosses is fast asleep."

"Good bye—good bye," echoed on all sides; and the whole cavalcade hastened into the street. The luggage had all been properly packed up—a basket with wine and cold pies, ham, beef, &c., had been stowed away under one of the seats inside—and the two postillions sate like automatons upon their horses. Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Winkle, jumped into the chaise—Mr. Samuel Weller banged the door very hard—his father mounted the dickey—he followed the example—and the carriage rolled rapidly away from the Rue Royale, amidst the wavings of handkerchiefs, the shouts, and the "farewells!" of those whom the travellers left behind them.

CHAPTER LXXI

THE DINNER AT BEAUVAIS.—THE HASHED RABBIT.—THE MASHED POTATOES.—MR. WINKLE'S NIGHT'S REST IS DISTURBED IN A MOST EXTRAORDINARY MANNER.

At five o'clock in the evening, the travellers arrived at Beauvais, where they determined upon dining and passing the night, Mr. Winkle declaring that it would be quite impossible for them to travel during the darkness,—not that he was by any means afraid; but it was a strange country—and robberies *had* been committed—and throats *had* been cut—and, all things considered, prudence was the better part of valour. Mr. Snodgrass was of the same opinion; and Mr. Tupman, who had espied a pretty chamber-maid, also supported the motion. Mr. Pickwick accordingly yielded to the wishes of his friends; and in a very short time dinner made its appearance.

"This is comfortable," said Mr. Pickwick, who had just scalded his mouth with the hot soup: "I know nothing more pleasant than a nice dinner after a tedious day's travelling."

"Nor I," said Mr. Tupman. "Waiter—what have we here?"

"A *gibelotte*, Sir," was the reply.

Now Mr. Tupman was excessively fond of rabbit hashed in the French fashion, and he commenced a vigorous assault upon the dish before him, helping himself at the same time to a quantity of mashed potatoes which were also within his reach.

"I wonder what Arabella will say to all the gloves and shoes I am taking over to her," said Mr. Winkle.

"I wish I had bought that monkey for Emily, which I saw on the Boulevards the other day," observed Mr. Snodgrass.

Mr. Pickwick was also expressing his regrets that he had not purchased a large dancing-bear, to which he had taken a fancy one day in Paris, in order to present it to the Zoological Society of London, when a violent ejaculation from the lips of Mr. Tupman cut short his useless repinings.

"What is the matter, Tupman?" cried Mr. Pickwick: "is the house on fire?"

"Or have you burnt your mouth?" demanded Mr. Winkle.

"Neither," answered Mr. Tupman, his usually red face being at this moment excessively pale: "but, as I live, here is a rabbit that fed upon wood!"

"On wood!" shouted his three friends.

"On wood," returned Mr. Tupman; and, as he spoke, he rattled something about in his plate with his fork.

"Well, upon my word, it *is* wood!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick. "I hope the French don't luxuriate on deal boards."

"I have heard that French cooks can make a dish out of any thing," said Mr. Winkle, in a voice rendered tremulous by deep emotion; "and that a fricassee of an old slipper is no unusual thing. But I did

not think that they could stew down a large log of wood, and call it a rabbit."

"Well—it *is* mysterious," said Mr. Pickwick, taking off his spectacles, wiping, and putting them on again. "But we will sift this to the bottom."

"So I have," cried Mr. Tupman, "and can find nothing but two pieces of wood mixed up with the meat."

At this moment the waiter entered the room; and the four gentlemen detailed the grounds of their complaints and alarms all at the same time.

"Pieces of wood—" began Mr. Tupman.

"Instead of rabbit!" cried Mr. Winkle

"Stewed logs—" said Mr. Snodgrass.

"Served up to gentlemen," added Mr. Pickwick—an exclamation which seemed to infer that the great man would not have been so much astonished nor so deeply indignant, were the guilty dish presented to people who were *not* gentlemen.

"Ah! *mon dieu!*" cried the waiter: "me now understand de whole affair! me see trough de whole ting! Ah! ha! god-dem! *Sacrebleu! je vois ça, moi.*"

"What is it, Sir?" ejaculated the indignant Mr. Pickwick.

"Vot it is?" returned the waiter; "me go for to ex-plain dis little bisness to you, *Messieurs*, in de two minits."

"Make haste then," cried Mr. Winkle, lifting up his fork in a most menacing manner.

"Dis it, dis it," exclaimed the waiter. "You see my master, de *bourgeois*, he have one vare pretty little son—a son boy, how you call him? *Eh bien!* Dis little son boy he vare fond o' all kind of amoosements like all de little boys in de vorld; an' he also vare much fond of skippin'—"

Here Mr. Tupman gave a very audible groan.

"An' by some accident or von other," added the waiter, "you may depend upon it his skippin' rope is fell into de fricassee—how you call it?"

"Wretch!" cried Mr. Tupman. "Bring me a glass of brandy this instant—do you hear?"

"*Oui, Monsieur*," answered the waiter; and in a very short time this little accident was remedied and forgotten. But just as Mr. Tupman was making amends for his disappointment in respect to the *gibelotte*, by attacking other dishes, and especially the mashed potatoes, Mr. Samuel Weller rushed very unceremoniously into the room.

"Stop there now," cried Sam, hastening up to Mr. Tupman, and wresting the knife and fork out of his hands, as soon as he had cast a hurried look around the table, and scrutinized the contents of each gentleman's plate: "no more o' this here, Sir. Beg pardon for the interruption, as is wery uncivil on my part, vich wos the observation made by the sveep ven he fell down the wrong chimbley into the gen'leman's kitchen."

"Sam!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman; "what does all this mean?"

"Vy, you don't vant to be pisoned, do you, Sir?" cried Mr. Samuel Weller, placing his arms akimbo.

"Poisoned!" ejaculated Mr. Tupman, while Mr. Pickwick and

Mr. Snodgrass sate aghast and speechless in their chairs; and Mr. Winkle seized a knife and swore he'd *do* for the landlord before he'd *done*.

"Yes, pisoned!" reiterated Sam. "I see it all, an' wos determined not to let that there kitchen-maid have her evil vays. Perwention's better than cure, as the sailor said ven he cut his leg off to hinder it from mortifyin'."

"What do you mean, Sam?" cried the agonised Mr. Tupman. "Am I poisoned, or am I not? If so, bring me pen and ink and let me make my will."

At this dolorous speech, Mr. Winkle was not only moved to tears, but also out of his chair, and on to Mr. Tupman's neck, where he fell, and swore that his old friend should not die unavenged.

"Wot's all this gammonin' about?" cried Sam, replacing Mr. Winkle in his seat. "There—you keep your cheer, and don't make yourself uneasy. It ain't so wery bad arter all; o'ny rayther nasty—that's all."

"Explain yourself, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, peremptorily; for he now recovered his breath and his authority simultaneously.

"Vell, then, here goes," exclaimed Mr. Weller. "Jist now I takes a peep into the kitchen, and wot should I see but a wery pretty young gal as had burnt her finger vith that ere i-dentical dish as you kicked up a row about jist now. The poor young creatur' cried wery bad, and didn't know wot to do vith her finger. So I scrapes a little tatur and claps it on the sore place for her, and it give her wery great ase in a minit, 'cos taturs is wery good for scalds, Sir, taturs is. I repeated the application, as chaps says ven they sends petitions to the Ministers an' gets no answers; an' in a few moments the place wos nearly vell. But, mind, I didn't tell her, Sir, to go an' make you a dish o' mashed taturs vith the wery scrapin's as come off her fingers. Wot's good in von place ain't in another, as the doctor said to his patient ven he drank all the brandy vith vich he ought to ha' bathed his leg."

"And are you sure that *that* potatoe is the same which—" began Mr. Pickwick.

"The same as—" said Mr. Snodgrass, unable to achieve the sentance which his greater leader had begun.

"The same as wos on the sore finger," cried Sam. "Sure! eh—to be sure, I am sure! Didn't I see it vith my own eyes?"

"Then why didn't you tell us of it before?" asked Mr. Pickwick.

"'Cos there's another dinner-party in the 'ouse," answered Sam; "an' I thought that the taturs wos for them, till I see some come out on the plate vich had contained Mr. Tupman's hashed rabbit."

"You may retire now, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick. "The very first thing to-morrow morning we will start, and leave this horrible hotel, without breakfasting here."

"It's on'y a triflin' accident, Sir," returned Sam, as he slowly retreated from the room, "an' von vich is wery easily mended, as the gen'leman said who broke the Policeman's head."

Mr. Pickwick and his friends did not, however, seem to entertain the same opinion. The two little accidents just related, cast a damp upon their spirits, and not even the use of ardent ones could put them into

a good humour. They therefore soon retired to their respective couches, with the understanding that they were to rise and pursue their journey at a very early hour.

Mr. Winkle had not been quite three quarters of an hour in bed, and certainly not more than twenty minutes asleep, when he was suddenly awoke by a heavy substance which fell with amazing violence upon his body. The impression that first flashed across his mind, was that the chimney had fallen in, and he roared out, "Fire!" with all his might: but the heavy weight, beneath which he lay, suddenly moved of its own accord, and he was therefore convinced that it was not an assemblage of bricks and mortar; he accordingly changed his note, and sang out, "Thieves!"

But his room was in a secluded part of the house, and no one answered his exclamations. He therefore began to use super-human endeavours to rid himself of the oppressive weight that lay upon him and nearly crushed him to atoms; but all his efforts were unavailing. The mass gave one loud grunt, turned round again, and then set up such a sonorous snore, that Mr. Winkle felt convinced his unpleasant companion was really a living being.

Covered with perspiration, the unhappy Mr. Winkle made a desperate thrust with his two fists at the sides of the mighty mass which had overwhelmed him, and by dint of the most strenuous and unwearied efforts, succeeded in extricating himself from his unpleasant position. The moment he had hurled the corpulent person from off his own, he rushed out of the room, and commenced a hideous bawling in the passage, commingling the words, "Fire!" "Thieves!" "Robbers!" "Murderers!" and "Help!" in a species of original melody which was any thing but grateful to the ears of those whom it at length reached.

Mr. Pickwick started from his dreams, his slumber, a violent perspiration, and his couch, at the same moment, and darted into the passage; but as Mr. Snodgrass occupied the room precisely opposite, and was emanating from that room just at the moment when Mr. Pickwick issued from his own, those great men came in violent contact with each other, and rolled heavily upon the ground, to the total discomfiture of Mr. Tupman, who on his part had been also awakened by the hideous cries of Mr. Winkle, and in his haste to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, fell over his two friends as he rushed up the passage in a state of frantic alarm.

The confusion was now at its utmost. At one end of a long and dimly-lighted passage was a gentleman roaring with all his might and main; and at the other were three more, sprawling upon the ground. These latter, however, soon succeeded in recovering their equilibrium; but Mr. Winkle did not so speedily recover his presence of mind; and when questioned by his friends as to the cause of his terror, he merely pointed towards his own room, and bawled out, "Fire!" louder than ever.

"This is most extraordinary!" cried Mr. Pickwick, returning to look into his young friend's room, and *seeing* nothing but the darkness.

"Fire! Thieves! there they are!" shouted Mr. Winkle.

"Where?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"On my bed," answered Mr. Winkle.

"That is a curious place for thieves to choose, my dear Winkle," remonstrated Mr. Pickwick; and, encouraged by the lucid truth of his own observation, he stepped quietly and cautiously into the room.

"He rushes to death and to destruction!" exclaimed Mr. Snodgrass, smacking his left breast very hard with his right hand.

In the meantime Mr. Pickwick stole up to the bed which Mr. Winkle had abandoned, and the noise of a man, breathing very hard, fell upon his ears. Mr. Pickwick therefore came to the sagacious and logical conclusion, that there *was* a living being in the room.

"Who are you, my good fellow?" said Mr. Pickwick, in his blandest tones.

A loud grunt was the only reply

"G—d bless me!" thought Mr. Pickwick: "it can't be a real pig—and yet it might be. I have seen a learned pig in England who did very wonderful things; and surely, if an English pig could tell the different cards, a French one might very easily escape out of his stye and find his way to a bed-room."

Scarcely had Mr. Pickwick made these very sapient reflections, when the living being turned slowly round upon the bed, and spoke in human tones. Mr. Pickwick listened attentively.

"Samivel—Samivel!" said the voice: "wot a wery undutiful little boy you air, Samivel. Here's your old father, as brought you up and eddicated you at the charity-school, a-dyin' o' thirst, an' you don't even ax him to take a drop o' water. Them tumblers o' punch as ve took a leetle too much on, operates wery strange on my brain!"

"Mr. Weller," said Mr. Pickwick softly.

"Who's that a-takin' my name in wain?" cried the old coachman. "Vy, blowed if I ain't gone to bed vith my boots an' unexpressibles on. Ve doesn't grow viser as ve grows older, I'm wery much afeerd."

"Mr. Weller, my good friend," said Mr. Pickwick, once more apostrophising the moralizer, "is that you?"

"Me!" ejaculated Mr. Weller; and, after a little prudent consideration as to whether the truth consisted in a negative or affirmative reply, he added, "Yes, it be. But who air you?"

"Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Weller," answered the immortal gentleman. "But here comes a light."

At that moment Sam entered the room, bearing a candle in his hand, and followed by Mr. Winkle, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Tupman.

"Vell, here you air, old touch-an'-go," cried Sam. "This comes o' drinkin' too much punch afore you goes to bed. You've got into the wrong box, old feller, for vonce in your life, as the constable said ven he locked the drunken nobleman up in the cage."

"The wrong box, Samivel," cried Mr. Weller, senior: "wot d'ye mean?"

"Vy, that you've found your vay into Mr. Vinkle's room," explained Sam: "an' the sooner you're out on it the better, cos ve has to rise airly in the mornin', an' wants a good night's rest aforehand."

Mr. Weller, senior, rose from the couch on which he had been so comfortably reposing, as his son uttered these words, and began to stammer out a variety of apologies to Mr. Winkle. Peace and tranquillity were thus once more restored, and the remainder of the night

was passed without any farther adventures of importance. At an early hour on the ensuing morning, the travellers rose, ordered the horses to be harnessed to their carriage, and resumed their journey, with the intention of breakfasting at Grandvilliers—a town only a few leagues distant from Beauvais.

CHAPTER LXXII

PICKWICK AT HOME.

Our history is now drawing to a conclusion, and the pen of the faithful biographer will be shortly laid aside—at least for a season. We set out on our travels with Mr. Pickwick from the town of Calais, and we return home with him for the present as far as Dover. The morning was murky and dull when his foreign travels commenced: the sun shone blythely and brightly to welcome his arrival once more in his native clime. If such be the welcome he received at the hands of that great luminary on his landing at Dover, let us see what greeting awaits him at the Ship Hotel, whither he and his companions bent their way, with the hope of obtaining luncheon and a post-chaise—the former to take the cold out of their stomachs, and the latter to take them to London.

As they entered the hall of the Ship Hotel, landlord, waiters, and chambermaids rushed out to receive them, the prospect of feeding six comely looking gentlemen (three of whom were very fat and must eat to keep up their sleekness of condition, and the other three, being very thin, were consequently compelled to do the same to prevent themselves from growing thinner)—such a prospect, we say, being a highly gratifying one to all connected with the hotel

"Private rooms and luncheon immediately," said Mr. Pickwick, surrendering his great coat to a waiter, his hat to a chambermaid, his umbrella to the "boots," and his appetite to the care of the landlord.

"Hadn't we better ask about the post-chaise at the same time, Pickwick?" enquired Mr. Tupman.

"What name did you say, Sir?" exclaimed the landlord: "beg pardon—Sir—but will explain my motives for asking such a question."

"My name is Pickwick," answered our great hero.

"How singular!" cried the landlord, turning to the head-waiter.

"Very," answered that functionary, surveying his own white cotton stockings with great complacence, and Mr. Pickwick's gaiters with an air of contempt.

"What is singular?" demanded Mr. Pickwick. "My name, I suspect," he added with a smile, "is pretty well known to the world."

"Pray, Sir, are you any relation to the great Mr. Pickwick—to *the* Mr. Pickwick?" continued the landlord.

"I rayther think this is *the* Pickvick, old feller," interrupted Mr Samuel Weller, who did not at all relish this multiplicity of questions. "That's Pickvick, an' I'm Veller."

"Impossible!" cried the landlord, glancing towards the head-waiter.

"Impossible, Sir," echoed the head-waiter, looking at his cotton-stockings.

At this crisis, Mr. Samuel Weller stepped forward, and putting himself into a pugilistic attitude, threatened, in figurative language to inflict concealment—or rather to bestow "a good hiding" upon any one who should dare to doubt the identity of his master with the greatest traveller in the universe.

"You need not get into a passion, young man," said the landlord, *hiding* himself behind the head-waiter to escape one of another description: "I do not doubt but that your master is a very excellent man; though as for his being *the* Mr. Pickwick, you must excuse me if I decline to believe it, inasmuch as the real traveller has been staying with us for these last six weeks."

"And the best customer he is that *we* ever had," cried the head-waiter. "He never sits down to dinner without champagne and turtle-soup."

"And he has promised to take me with him to France in his new balloon, when it is ready," exclaimed the chamber-maid.

"He has only been waiting here for the arrival of a French government steam-boat from Cherbourg to take him across," added the landlord.

"He's a prince in his hexpenditur," said the waiter.

"Sich a nice young man," simpered the chamber-maid. "Talks so fine, no one can't understand him."

"Vears paytent-leather butes," cried the individual whose attributes the cleansing of those articles especially concerned, and from which ne borrowed his expressive name.

"And, as Joseph observes, the best customer I ever had," said the landlord. "For the six weeks he's been here I'm sure his bill ain't less than ninety pound—with the ready money advanced because his Paris bankers haven't sent his remittances yet."

"There is something very extraordinary in all this," remarked Mr. Pickwick to Mr. Tupman.

"Decidedly," said Mr. Tupman.

"My good man," said Mr. Pickwick to the landlord, "do you mean to assert that there is a gentleman of my name in this house?"

"I do, Sir," was the reply.

"And does *he* assert that he is the great Mr. Pickwick?" enquired our hero modestly.

"He declares that he is the gentleman who has made such a noise in the world within the last few years," answered the landlord.

"Where is he?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"He is not in at this moment, Sir," said the landlord: "he generally walks out about this time."

"Very well," returned Mr. Pickwick. "Let us have some lunch, and as soon as the individual in question returns, let me know."

These directions were received by the landlord with a low bow, and the luncheon was speedily got ready. Old Mr. Weller and Sam were provided with a similar meal in another room.

"How singular an English town seems after so long an absence" said Mr. Pickwick, helping himself to a glass of bottled ale.

"Very," returned Mr. Winkle: "the houses are so low, and the windows so small."

"Nothing poetical about them," observed Mr. Snodgrass.

"The chamber-maid is not bad-looking," said Mr. Tupman; and then he bestowed a sigh upon the memory of Mademoiselle Anastasie de Volage.

"You are continually talking about the girls, Tupman," cried Mr. Snodgrass; "and yet you have never married."

"I always had an aversion to matrimony ever since I saw the *Ladder* which gives you an idea of the ups and downs of the married life," answered Mr. Tupman.

"It is very easy for one man to write his own opinions concerning a particular subject," returned Mr. Snodgrass: "but I have paraphrased the verses of the *Love's Ladder* to which you allude; and yet my views are only the impressions of one man's experience."

"Very just, Snodgrass," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "Have you the lines about you?"

"I have got the paraphrase in my pocket-book," replied Mr. Snodgrass.

"I should like to hear it," said Mr. Tupman, somewhat pettishly.

Mr. Snodgrass accordingly favoured his companions with the following stanzas upon a most interesting subject.

PREVIOUS TO AND AFTER MARRIAGE.

ADMIRATION.

Young Claudia's charms a thousand hearts had gained,
But her's by Damon only was obtained:
They marked each other's form—their eyes once met—
And these were glances neither could forget

FLIRTATION.

And now together see the happy pair,
At balls and festivals—they both are there
While he is jealous of his future bride,
Ling'ring for hours unwearied by her side.

APPROBATION.

Cupid! thou knowest that a glance approves,
Better than words, with him who truly loves:—
Oh! yes—for Damon's eyes at once conveyed
His approbation of the charming maid.

DECLARATION.

One eve he told his love! Was she distressed?
Oh! no—a gleam of pleasure filled her breast;
Yet modest fears were on her features seen,—
For wedlock's heav'n or hell—and nought between!

HESITATION.

Then came the soft timidity—the flush
Of virgin terrors mantling in a blush :
Thus the red rose-bud, when it greets the morn,
Is veiled in crimson deeper than the dawn!

AGITATION.

That Rose too quivers, when it hears the tale,
In Persian climates, of the Nightingale :*
So beat the heart of Claudia, as she heard
From Damon's lips each soft—impressive word!

ACCEPTATION

But he from fear and doubt was quickly freed
When both the parents to the match agreed :—
No cruel impediment before them lay—
Smiling through life appeared their future way!

SOLEMNIZATION

Though all the prayers by holy churchmen said,
And all the formal things by lawyers read,
Could ne'er increase their passion—still we find
Their hands at length before the altar joined.

ENDEARMENT.†

Deem'st thou, young Muse, that they are wearied yet—
That they their vows—their promises forget?
Though months be passed, their love is still the same,
And years will only serve t' increase the flame.

ATTACHMENT.

The ardent fires of love, 'tis true, are flown,
The rest to deep attachment mellowed down :—
They seem two flowers upon the self-same thorn,
Pluck one at night, the other's dead at morn!

OCCUPATION.

With them the hours roll happily away,
Their hearts contented, and their spirits gay :
Music and poetry—no selfish joy—
Or household duties—all their time employ!

CONTENTMENT.

No angry word their peace of mind impairs,
No foolish jealousy—no groundless cares ;
Their thoughts are placid as the summer sea,
Or as the perfumed gales of Araby.

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* The love of the Bulbul, or Nightingale, for Gul, the Rose, is proverbial in the east.

† Hitherto, the titles of the original *Love's Ladder*, as they *ascend* the ladder, have been preserved : henceforth, in their *descent*, they are all altered in this paraphrase, the result being different.

HARMONY.

No voice discordant in their dwelling 's heard—
Between them ne'er has passed a hasty word:
Gentle remonstrance—in a gentle tone—
And that but seldom—has been heard alone.

OFFSPRING.

Their children thrive around them, fair and brave,
As he who whilome crossed th' Atlantic wave,
And daring shaped his course till he unfuried
The Spanish banner in the Western World.*

OLD AGE.

Now forty years have rolled o'er Damon's head,
Since he and Claudia were together wed:—
Still is their love unchanged—aye, more sincere,
More deeply fixed with each revolving year.

DEATH.

Go—reader, mark that tomb!—There, side by side,
Do they repose,—and they together died;
For when stern Death had closed on one the day,
The other did not linger on the way!

"After all," said Mr. Tupman, when this paraphrase of a popular poem was brought to a conclusion, "matrimony may be very pleasant—but I think I am a *leetle* too old to marry now."

"Old!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick,—"a man is never too old to act prudently!"

At this moment a noise, emanating from the hall of the hotel, fell upon the ears of the four gentlemen, just as they were winding up their repast with a glass of excellent Madeira.

"Dinner at six, waiter—do you hear?" cried a loud voice in the hall; "and for eight of us, mind. Turtle, iced punch—and a neck of venison. And, waiter—"

"Yes, Sir."

"Ask your master to cash me another cheque on my Paris bankers for ten pounds," continued the voice. "I had a letter this morning to say that my funds are on the road; but as all the money in France is in specie, and I have got an enormous sum to receive, the waggon that brings it from Paris to Calais will be eight days before it arrives here."

"Very well, Sir," returned the waiter. "But here is master himself."

"I was just saying," began the loud voice once more.

"Beg pardon, Sir," interrupted the landlord; "but there is a gentleman in the next room—a gentleman, Sir, with three friends—who desires to speak with you. *His* name is also Pickwick."

* Christopher Columbus.

"Pickwick! Pickwick!" cried the loud voice. "Oh! very well—I will just say a word to a friend who is waiting for me in the street, and will then come back and see this Mr. Pickwick. Probably he is a relation of mine."

At that moment the door of an adjacent room was flung hastily open, and Mr. Pickwick, with his hand under his coat-tails, and followed by his three friends, issued into the hall.

"It is just as I thought!" exclaimed the indignant Mr. Pickwick.

"And no more than you expected," returned the loud voice, which belonged to no less a gentleman than Mr. William Sugden, late Captain Walsingham, and before that Mr. Adolphus Crashem. "How are you, Pickwick—my dear fellow?" Then in a whisper, he added, "Don't blow me here, old chap, it won't do you any good, and may affect my interest more than you can imagine. In two days I shall marry old Lady Pengarlick, and will then pay you all I owe. You were always my best friend, you know—you and the Great Cham."

"Swindler!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick; "I renounce all acquaintance with you. Ever since I knew you, you have done nothing but prey upon myself, my companions, or my friends; and scarcely a week passed away without my hearing of your infamous exploits."

"What!" cried the landlord, with a very long face, "is this the case, Sir?"

"It is," returned Mr. Pickwick: "that man is the greatest swindler under the canopy of heaven."

"Then he won't take me in the balloon," murmured the chambermaid, whom the noise had attracted to the spot.

"An' he ain't a gen'leman though he did vear paytent leathers," added the "boots."

"Waiter!" cried the landlord. "Waiter—Joseph, I say—don't stand there like a fool, looking at your d——d white cotton stockings, but go and fetch a constable."

"Mind what you are about," exclaimed Mr. Sugden, folding his arms very coolly and leaning against one of the door-posts with considerable indifference of manner: "I am nothing but a common debtor, and no felon. A man may take any name he chooses—and as for my being a great traveller, why—Pickwick is nothing to me. He has never gone farther than Paris, and I have been not only as far as Tartary, but also round the world fourteen times."

"Then, if this person," cried Mr. Pickwick, pointing to the landlord, "cannot give you in charge to a police-constable, I can and will for the several frauds you have practised upon me and my companions."

"Out again, old fellow," returned Mr. Sugden, as coolly as ever. "Those little inadvertencies of which you speak, happened in France—and *this* is England!"

"The rogue!" exclaimed the landlord, clenching his fists. "But I have got his three trunks—they are pretty heavy, and their contents will help to pay my bill. Not a stitch of anything shall he have! That's one consolation!"

"You are very welcome to all you can find in them, my dear fellow," said Mr. Sugden. "I make it a rule never to travel with much luggage on account of thieves; but as for the stones, cabbages, hay, and empty bottles, which you will find in my portmanteaus, as I before

said, you are quite welcome to them. Have you any thing else to say to me, gentlemen?"

"Yes—you are a scoundrel," answered Mr. Pickwick.

"Anything else?" demanded Mr. Sugden.

"A rogue—a villain," shouted Mr. Tupman.

"How's Anastasie?" asked Mr. Sugden. "Go on."

"A——" began Mr. Winkle; but as Mr. Sugden turned rather sharply round, he very prudently held his peace and Mr. Pickwick's coat-tails simultaneously.

"Wouldn't you like to take a share in my Equitable British and Foreign Elastic Wooden-Leg Company?" cried Mr. Sugden, pulling a pocket-book from the breast of his coat, and preparing to write down the names of Mr. Pickwick and his companions, with all imaginable gravity. "Or, stay—suppose we get up a Society for Protecting Hotel-Keepers and Soft Gentlemen from the Wiles of the Artful?"

"Wretch!" cried the indignant Mr. Pickwick, fire flashing from his expressive eyes: "your presence is hateful to me."

"Vich coach does he drive?" exclaimed old Mr. Weller, who now appeared upon the scene, followed by his dutiful son; "cos he'd better drive his-self off in a tvinklin' or so, or blowed if I don't show him the vay out o' this here coach-yard."

"This a friend of your's, Pickwick?" said Mr. Sugden, casting a patronizing glance upon old Weller, and then a familiar one upon Mr. Pickwick.

"That's for you, my fine feller, vith your imperent dewices and your knock-me-down vild Indian selvidge manners about you," cried Sam, at the same time bestowing such a kick upon the hinder parts of Mr. William Sugden, that that gentleman made but one leap from the door-way down the steps into the street. But nothing abashed, the young gentleman rose with considerable alacrity from the gutter, made a gracious bow to the crowd assembled at the door of the inn, and lounged leisurely away from the place with his hands in his pockets, a song in his throat, and a light heart in his left breast.

"Vell, if this ain't the rummevest go I ever see in all *my* life, call me a Norvegian, that's all!" cried Mr. Weller, senior.

It is not quite clear that the old gentleman fully understood the meaning of the term which he desired might be applied to himself upon a certain condition: but one thing is very sure, that he attached an idea of the most unmitigated contempt to the epithet, and in his mouth it was therefore as expressive as if it had been a word of more general usage in the same sense.

"Then you are *the* Mr. Pickwick after all, Sir—beg pardon," said the landlord, with a low bow, to the gentleman whose claims to that honourable title he had but a short time previously even more than doubted.

"I am," answered Mr. Pickwick; "and you are the victim of the greatest swindler that ever lived."

"Post-chaise is ready, gen'lemen," cried the head waiter, who had disappeared for a moment, during the above colloquy, and now returned again to the hall.

The bill was paid—the gentlemen stepped into the vehicle—old Mr. Weller and his son took their seats upon the dickey—and in a few

moments the equipage was rolling on the high road to the English metropolis.

It was about ten o'clock at night when Mr. Pickwick and his companions reached Dulwich Lodge, where numerous relations and friends had assembled to welcome the arrival of the travellers, in consequence of letters which had been despatched to them from Paris a few days previously. And then came such a quantity of kissing—and such shaking of hands—and such an interchange of kind words, compliments, questions, answers, and affectionate glances—that an observer would have melted into tears of gladness at the happy spectacle. Old Wardle (the father-in-law of Mr. Snodgrass) Mrs. Snodgrass, Mrs. Winkle, Trundle (Mr. Wardle's son-in-law) and his wife, and a variety of cousins and friends, were there to greet the travellers upon their return to England, and to be the first to welcome PICKWICK AT HOME!

On the following morning, immediately after breakfast, a distribution of the various presents took place. Gloves, bottles of *eau-de-cologne*, beautiful little Breguet watches, shoes, and a grand assortment of jewellery, were spread upon the table in Mr. Pickwick's study. And around that table was gathered a group of as happy faces as ever an observer could wish to behold; and while the division of the booty took place, the task was lightened by a thousand jokes, *bon mots*, and witty sayings. Some anecdote belonged to almost every article that Mr. Pickwick took up; and as he tendered the various presents to those for whom they were destined, he made his observations in something like the following manner:

"Here is a beautiful ring for you, Arabella," he said, addressing himelf to Mrs. Winkle. "I recollect purchasing it at a jeweller's in the Palais Royal—the day I had my pocket picked by a thief who begged to restore me my handkerchief which I had dropped. 'This is the way, Sir,' said he, 'in which you ought to put your handkerchief in your pocket; and then you will baffle all the thieves in Europe.'—'I am exceedingly obliged to you,' said I.—'Not at all, Sir,' returned the gentleman; and he walked away. Two minutes afterwards I found that he had robbed me of my purse."

"Well, I never!" exclaimed all the ladies at once.

"And here is a brooch for you, Wardle," continued Mr. Pickwick: "I selected it on purpose last Christmas-day. I recollect the circumstance well, because as I was coming out of the shop, with a heap of five franc pieces in my hand, I was accosted by an English gentleman, who asked me to oblige him with change for a five pound Bank of England note. I immediately gave him a hundred and twenty-five francs, and received a note in exchange. But on my return home, what was my astonishment when I read these words: *I promise to shave the bearer five times in return for this note. For the Governor and Company of the Barber's Society, Thomas Smith;* and in the corner was an immense *Five*."

"Excellent!" shouted Mr. Wardle. "The anecdote will always occur to my memory as often as I wear the brooch, which I hope will be a long time, old fellow, for your sake."

"These bracelets," resumed Mr. Pickwick, after a pause, "are for you, Emily. Snodgrass, my dear friend, hand them to your wife.

They will be more useful to her than the monkey which you intended to bring her over."

"A monkey!" shrieked all the ladies.

"Such was his intention," continued Mr. Pickwick. "However, there are the bracelets, and wear them for my sake. The day that I purchased them was marked by the following singular occurrence. I was walking across one of the bridges in Paris, when a well-dressed man suddenly threw himself over the parapet into the Seine. Fortunately he fell in a place where the water was not very deep, and he was speedily rescued from his perilous predicament. A crowd immediately collected round him—and I amongst the rest. He opened his eyes, and his first words were '*Mes enfans—mes pauvres enfans!* —My children, my poor children!' These piteous exclamations moved me, and I immediately gave the man a couple of Napoleons, they being all the money I had about me. 'L—d bless you, Sir,' said an Englishman, whom the occurrence had also attracted to the spot, 'he's done that already three times this week. He regularly drowns, or poisons, or stabs himself four or five times every week.'—'Good G—d!' said I; 'what does he do that for? Is he mad?'—'Mad! no,' returned the man: 'he is a devilish clever fellow on the contrary, and picks up a good deal of money in this way. It's an excellent business. He lives better by dying five or six times a week than I do by working hard.'—'What! is he an impostor, then,' cried I, naturally indignant at the gross manner in which I had been imposed upon.—'That's a harsh word, Sir,' answered the man: 'but he's something like it, though.'—I walked away, determined never to do another good action."

"That was really infamous," said Mrs. Snodgrass.

"Of course it was," coincided her husband.

"This snuff-box is for you, Trundle," cried Mr. Pickwick, addressing himself to Mr. Wardle's son-in-law. "I bought it on the Quai des Orfevres—a street occupied almost entirely by jewellers and silversmiths. As I came out of the shop, I saw a venerable and gentlemanly old man, with long white hair, suddenly slip down by the parapet that overlooks the river. I immediately hastened to his assistance, and raised him from the stones on which he had fallen. He appeared very weak and feeble, and leant heavily upon me as I helped him to get up. But when he was once more on his legs, he thanked me very sincerely, asked me my name and address, called a hackney-coach, and departed, assuring me that I should ere long have cause to remember him. I thought I had probably been of some service to a nobleman in disguise, and was felicitating myself upon the occurrence as I walked home, when accidentally putting my hand into my pocket, I found that my purse was gone. The rogue was a practised thief no doubt; and had the snuff-box not been in another pocket, I dare say that I should not have had the pleasure of giving it to you to-day."

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed old Wardle. "Then it appears that there are thieves and rogues in that Paris which you love so much, as well as elsewhere."

"There are dishonest men everywhere," answered Mr. Pickwick; "but this I can safely say, that there is much less crime in France than there is in England."

"And how do you account for that?" demanded Mr. Wardle.

"There are two direct causes," answered Mr. Pickwick, "which strike even a superficial observer. In the first place there is not near so much poverty and want in France, as there is in this country, because the taxes are far less oppressive, and much more just—the principal taxes being a property and a poll-tax; and hence there is less *necessity* to commit crime for the purpose of obtaining the means of existence. In the second place, the system of passports leads to an almost certain detection of the malefactor, and thus another kind of dread is added to that which the law of course inspires. But let us not discuss serious matters now: the distribution of my little presents is not quite terminated. Sam!"

"Sir," said Mr. Weller, stepping forward.

"Call your wife, Sam," returned Mr. Pickwick. "Tell Mary I want to speak to her."

In a few minutes Mary made her appearance, blushing and looking as modest as the first day of her marriage. As she approached her master, she curtseyed, and then cast a timid glance round the room.

"Here are some stuffs to make frocks for your children, Mary," said Mr. Pickwick, "and a pair of ear-rings for yourself. And this time," added Mr. Pickwick, glancing towards the friends that surrounded him, and smiling, "there is no anecdote attached to my present."

"Thank'ee kindly, Sir," said Mary, and with another curtsey, she retired from the room.

"I have only one regret," observed Mr. Pickwick very seriously, "in reference to the various presents which I have now distributed; and that is—I am sorry I did not bring home the dancing-bear for the Zoological Society. A finer bear I never saw in my life, and the keeper declared that a more affectionate animal he never had had to deal with."

"Wery right he wos too, Sir," remarked Mr. Weller; "for to my certin knowledge this same wery affectionate hanimal hugged a old lady to death von mornin' in the streets, and was then a-goin' to pay his attentions to a young child, ven a Johnny Darmy put a end to his perliteness, by tellin' him an' his mas'er not to interfere vith other people's bisness, but to go about their own."

"Then, everything considered," said Mr. Pickwick, after a moment's deep reflection, "it is perhaps as well that the dancing-bear should remain where he is."

"Quite," exclaimed Mr. Wardle.

"Dangerous things them is, Sir," remarked Mr. Weller; "wery dangerous; cos there's sich a thing as bein' a little too tender at times, as the lady said ven her husban' volloped her for not lovin' him enough?"

The discussion about the merits of the bear now dropped, and the ladies proceeded to pack up in neat little parcels the various articles of the *toilette*, which Mr. Pickwick had brought for them from Paris. The remainder of the day—and indeed of the whole week—was passed in merriment and pleasure; and Mr. Pickwick declared that he felt himself quite young again as he joined in the dance together with his

friends, when the social hour of evening arrived, and the thick curtains shut out the cold winds of approaching winter.

CONCLUSION.

There now remains for us but little more to say. We cannot, however, conclude our labours, without placing at the disposal of our readers such information as we possess concerning the present position of some of the important characters that have figured in the preceding pages.

Mr. Pickwick continues to reside at Dulwich Lodge, resolved never to undertake any more journeys, but to pass the remainder of his life in peace and tranquillity at home. He is contented with the vast reputation which his travels have procured for him, but prefers his renown as an universal philanthropist, to that which his undying exploits as a traveller have obtained. Since his acquaintance with Mr. Septimus Chitty, he often quotes the words—*Exegi monumentum ære perennius*; but applies them, with that modesty which is one of the principal characteristics of this extraordinary man, rather to his fame as a friend to humanity, than as the great traveller he really was. For the behoof of those who feel interested in such matters we do not hesitate to say that he still wears the tights and immortal gaiters which contributed, in no small degree, to his extensive and well-earned reputation. Whenever he retrospects over his residence in France, and the circumstances connected with it, his principal cause of self-felicitation is the failure he experienced in securing the hand of Mrs. Weston. He prefers his bachelor-condition, and nothing now could induce him to change it. All his amiable traits and peculiarities remain unchanged; and, of an evening, when he sits in a brown study, and in a coat of similar hue, he does not forget to have his jovial glass as well as his book before him.

Mr. Tupman has taken a cottage at a little distance from Mr. Pickwick's house; and the two gentlemen pass much of their time together. Every quarter day Mr. Tupman despatches a letter, containing a remittance (why the word "remittance" should always mean money, we know not) to Mr. Kallaway in Paris; and that gentleman's reply is always awaited with the utmost anxiety. Mr. Tupman loves to converse upon the amours of his youthful days, and now and then visits certain suburban balls and fêtes, to which however he is not accompanied by Mr. Pickwick.

Mr. Snodgrass has also given up a roving life, and has promised his wife never to leave her again. He devotes himself to his children—and divides his attention between those of the body and those of the brain: in plain English, he rocks the cradle and writes poetry.

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Pickwick abroad; or, the tour in France.
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